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BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON

HISTORICAL PAINTER

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Thomson sculp.

B. R. HAYDON, ESQ.^R

B. R. HAYDON (1820)

Engraved by Thomson after George H. Harlow. Published by Henry Colburn and Co.,
Conduit Street, December 1, 1820

BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON

HISTORICAL PAINTER

BY CLARKE OLNEY

Strenuous for the bright reward—WORDSWORTH



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Preface



IF, INDEED, “the proper study of mankind is man,” a student of the vagaries of the human spirit could journey farther and fare worse than to examine the colorful and tragic career of Benjamin Robert Haydon, the subject of this biography. Let it be admitted that Haydon wrote his own *Life* far better than anyone else can ever write it. But in his autobiography and his journals, as inevitably in such works, perspective and objectivity are often lacking: to supply these lacks is the principal task of his biographer. In this attempt, however, one can never depart for long from Haydon’s own record of events and personalities and of himself. To do so would be to lose the unique and essential flavor of the man which pervades his writing.

The little hour during which Haydon strutted across the stage of London life lasted some forty-two years. When he came to the city in 1804, George III was on the throne. His greatest triumphs as a painter occurred during the Regency and the reign of George IV. When Haydon died, Victoria had been queen for almost a decade. In those early years, Napoleon was casting his long shadow across Europe and England. Then Waterloo, and the shadow lifted. Industrialism began to hit its stride during the era of peace that followed; political and social reform burgeoned. Haydon was in contact with many of those who were shaping great events; and not content merely to observe, he entered into the life of his time, wherever he could, as an active and courageous protagonist.

Haydon is known to students of the early nineteenth century less as a painter, perhaps, than as a friend of literary men and women. In a period of unusually close rapprochement between the worlds of art and letters, he knew, casually or intimately, more writers than any other artist of his day. To many of them he seemed an authentic ally in a related field. In his own profession he was equally well known but not so highly regarded.

Before the appearance of Eric George’s excellent book, *The Life*

and *Death of Benjamin Robert Haydon*, in 1948, the biography of Haydon had never been satisfactorily written. Most of those who dealt with him were content to sketch the more obvious excesses and exaggerations of his character and career. But there are some readers who will want to know more about this man who could move Keats and Wordsworth, Lamb, Reynolds, and Hunt, Elizabeth Barrett and Mary Russell Mitford to write poems in his praise, to admire him and his pictures, even, perhaps, on occasion, to lend him money when money was scarce. The painter of *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem* and *Lazarus*, the author of the deathless *Autobiography*, the defender of the Elgin Marbles, the intimate friend of Keats and Wilkie, of Wordsworth and Hazlitt and Sir Walter Scott deserves something better than mention in footnotes, and scanty derogations scattered through the biographies of his friends.

Haydon was not always a very good painter. At his worst, especially in the latter frenzied years, he produced some extremely bad pictures. But the fact remains that a number of his better paintings were sensationally successful in their day, and stirred certain of his contemporaries, men and women of unquestionable taste, to sincere and often enthusiastic admiration.

Later criticism, it is true, has for the most part deprecated all his art, partly because the tendency of modern painting from the Pre-Raphaelites to the present has been away from the Raphael-esque high art which Haydon advocated and to some extent practiced; partly, no doubt, because Haydon did not belong to one of those schools or movements or cliques whose members support each other by mutual admiration. It is more than likely, too, that Haydon's own heavy-handed advertisement of his wares served to disgust the more influential Victorian critics, whose prim and scornful judgments have been accepted at face value by writers on art from John Ruskin to Aldous Huxley. The latter, having viewed four or five of Haydon's paintings, including one of the very worst, was willing to dismiss the rest, sight unseen, as entirely worthless.

It is high time that criticism undertook to re-examine Haydon's art. At least one modern critic, A. C. Sewter, has attempted such a revaluation, and has come up with the surprising conclusion that

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Haydon's painting is not the ridiculous travesty that has commonly been supposed. "We should not," he says, "allow Haydon to be high-hatted and summarily dismissed, but should insist on a proper examination of the evidence, which nobody since Watts has apparently bothered to make."

Haydon's writing, too, upon which some of his reputation must rest, deserves a minor but secure place in the corpus of English literature. A great deal of it was done in the heat of battle; much was impetuous and ill-advised. But with no pretensions to being a disciplined man of letters, Haydon had a genuine literary gift: a knack of happy and vivid phrasing, a keen eye for humor (in the old sense of the word), and at times a powerful rhetorical style, impassioned, impressive.

It is to be hoped also that some day credit may be given him for his spade work for modern social concepts of art, notably the relation of art and design to manufacture. He was as far ahead of his time in some of his ideas as he was out-dated in his devotion to high art. There are signs that the historians of art have begun to recognize his contribution to causes advocated with greater success by Ruskin, Morris, and others later in the century.

But influences, friendships, literary merit, and all the rest are not enough to account for the extraordinary interest which the man himself arouses. Haydon was extraordinary vital—like Wordsworth's poet, "a man pleased with his own passions and volitions," rejoicing "more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him."

In Haydon's extraordinary complexity, there were many elements easy to scorn or despise—marks of the cad, the poseur, the charlatan—a genius for putting the worst foot forward—more than a trace of megalomania—too obvious flaws which blinded many of his contemporaries, and have blinded some of our own, to his solid virtues. But, as Blunden puts it, "if we find his heavy borrowings of all his friends a sad blot, we should try to get over it; after all, he has not borrowed from us." And if with sympathy and tolerance we are willing to look beneath the often garish surface, we may find a nature that had in it something to love and respect, as a surprising number of his more discerning friends were able to do.

There is a certain excess about Haydon that makes him unsympa-

thetic at times and difficult to understand. Frequently he gives vent to emotions so frenzied as to seem mad. What we may not realize is that these excesses were, in his opinion, necessary preliminaries to artistic creation. "Emotion recollected in tranquility" had little place in his creed.

The year after his arrival in London, there was published a book of *Essays* by John Foster, a Baptist minister. The second of these essays, "On Decision of Character," made a tremendous impression on the young painter, and perhaps more than any other single work influenced the course of his life. He recommended it to his friends, patrons, and pupils; wrote an article "Decision of Character, the great requisite for a young Student of Historical Painting in England" for the third number of *Annals of the Fine Arts* (1816); and himself never ceased striving to live up to its principles. In times of doubt or failure or disappointment, he turned to it: "to rouse my spirit and keep up my firmness. I read and reread it, prayed with all my heart, and resolved, come what would, to proceed with a greater work. . . ." For Foster had said:

The first prominent mental characteristic of the person whom I describe [the Man of Decision], is, a complete confidence in his own judgment. . . .

The action of strong character seems to demand something firm in its material basis, as massive engines require . . . to be fixed on a solid foundation. Accordingly . . . a majority of the persons most remarkable for decisive character, have possessed great constitutional physical firmness . . . a tone of vigour . . . adapted to great exertion and endurance. This is clearly evinced . . . by the prodigious labours and deprivations which they have borne in prosecuting their designs. . . .

Though he do not absolutely despise the understandings of other men, he will perceive their dimensions as compared with his own, which will preserve its independence through every communication and encounter. . . . A strenuous *will* must accompany the conclusions of thought. . . .

Weakness, in every form, tempts arrogance. . . . When a firm decisive spirit is recognized, it is curious to see how the space clears around a man, and leaves him room and freedom. . . . There is a feeling, as in respect to Fate, that the decrees of so inflexible a spirit *must* be right, or that, at least, they *will* be accomplished.

Again taking his cue from Foster, Haydon found special delight in frenzied reaction to his reading. Such emotional push-ups, he felt, toned his mind to noble painting and gave power and gusto

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to his art. He strove to identify himself with the heroic characters in the books he read: "read Boswell; was excessively affected by the account of Johnson's death"; "Read Homer in English to stir up my fancy, that I might conceive and execute my hero's head with vigour and energy"; "How Homer raises you by degrees to the fury of battle! . . . I never read Homer without longing to run somebody through for a week afterward. . . ." "I read seventeen hours a day at *Clarissa* [Harlowe]. . . . When *Lovelace* writes: 'Dear Belton, it is all over, and *Clarissa* lives,' I got up in a fury and wept like an infant, and cursed the d——d *Lovelace* till exhausted."

This type of emotionalism, Haydon believed, was most beneficial to the painter who would create great poetic art. His ability to react so completely was proof of his own poetic nature and fitness. As Foster had put it:

While animated by some magnanimous sentiments which he has heard or read, or while musing on some great example, a man may conceive the design, and partly sketch the plan, of a generous enterprise; and his imagination revels in the felicity, to others and himself, that would follow from its accomplishment. The splendid representation always centres in himself as the hero who is to realize it.

From the first Haydon saw himself as just such a hero, the romantic champion of great principles. For most pedestrian folk the commonplace virtues—temperance, loyalty, sincerity, honesty—are enough. But the romantic must always have a Cause, a Quest—some idealization toward the achievement of which he can direct his life struggle.

Haydon never doubted the authenticity of his call. His sense of it fills his writings. When doubts assailed and difficulties gathered, an inner voice always urged him on. And hearing the voice he replied, " 'So I will,' and thenceforth lost all dispondence." At times his conviction of Messiahship is impressive; too often it becomes merely ridiculous. There was the time when he was walking down Fleet Street on a cold winter's day. Feeling very hungry, he went into *Peele's Coffee House* for some soup. "It was such an idle thing to do in the middle of the day that I shrank back blushing for fear of meeting *Michel Angelo's* spectre, crying: 'Haydon! Haydon!'

thou idle rascal! is this the way to eminence?' In spite of this, though, I went in."

He constantly dramatized himself. His inner life must have been a continual ferment of vivid experience. Excess in expression was habitual to him. He "darted" across streets, "flew" at his canvas, painted "like a tiger," "felt like a lion and read like one," "shouted like a savage," plunged into the sea "like a bull in a green meadow." He compared his mind to a "steam boiler without a valve"; he painted as though "with air-balloons under [his] arm-pits." Describing the dawn of an idea he wrote: "All of a sudden a great flash comes inside your head, as if a powder magazine had exploded without any noise. Then come ideas by millions—the difficulty is to choose."

This inner dramatic picture of himself was always before the painter's eyes, a fact one must recognize if he would understand the mainspring of Haydon's life.

It is highly regrettable that Haydon's journals are not available to the student. For many years after the painter's death they dropped from sight; only recently have they been rediscovered. What is known of their history and present status may be summarized as follows. Some time after Haydon's death the journals came into the hands of Frank Scott Haydon, his elder son. When he died, in 1887, they came into the possession of Ellen Mary Middleton Haydon, Frank Haydon's only daughter, who for personal reasons did not wish them made public. On her death, some years ago, the journals were bought by Mr. Maurice Buxton Forman, a Keats scholar and editor. Ever since that time, he and Professor Willard B. Pope of the University of Vermont have been preparing an edition of the journals.

So far as I know, only one recent scholar has been allowed access to the manuscript journals. Miss Dorothy Hewlett was permitted to examine them when she was preparing the second and enlarged edition of her *A Life of John Keats* (1949). A comment of Miss Hewlett's may be quoted here: "One fact, I think, emerges from a reading of the original journals. Haydon might have been impulsive, wrongheaded, obstinate in his views, but he was not malicious or deliberately untruthful. When he asserts that for six weeks

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Keats . . . was hardly ever sober, he was enlarging, exaggerating in characteristic fashion, but I cannot feel he was deliberately traducing his friend."

The journals are described by Miss Hewlett as being "twenty-seven in number (twenty-six in folio)." From all accounts they consist of a vast miscellany of clippings, jottings, calculations, sketches, devotions, and anecdotes, together with a day-by-day record of events. Haydon also inserted a number of letters and miscellaneous documents.

It is evident that both of Haydon's early editors—Tom Taylor and Frederic Haydon—found it necessary to make extensive corrections and revisions. Even in his holograph letters—on which he presumably exercised more care than he did on his journals—Haydon's sentence structure and punctuation are often slipshod and informal. For such editing the ordinary reader at least should be grateful. Both these editors, however, undoubtedly omitted a certain amount of what must be rather salty comment on persons and events of the first half of the nineteenth century. We shall have to await the Forman-Pope edition for this material.

Haydon has not been overlooked by the writers of fiction. During his own lifetime he was crudely caricatured as "Daubson" in John Poole's *Little Pedlington and the Pedlingtonians* (1839). George Borrow made sport of him in chapter 38, "Painter of the Heroic," in *Lavengro*. Laurence Housman gracefully dramatized the "immortal dinner" in a short play, "Charles! Charles!" Mrs. Humphrey Ward's Fenwick in *Fenwick's Career* is clearly half Haydon and half George Romney. Aldous Huxley has used the poor "battered reformer" (in Blunden's phrase) in two short stories—"The Tillotson Banquet" and "Two or Three Graces"—and, thinly disguised, as Casimir Lypiatt in *Antic Hay*. Thackeray may have modeled "the eminent Mr. Gandish" in *The Newcomes* after him; and Dickens apparently meant Skimpole to be a composite picture of Haydon and Leigh Hunt. It is quite possible that Charles Lamb had Haydon in mind when he created Ralph Bigod, Esq.

In the Life which follows I have confined myself largely to a recital of biographical facts. My purpose has been to tell the story of Haydon's life against the background of his time. I have

not scrupled to quote largely from his writings and from the writings of those who knew him. While I do not feel qualified to engage in controversy over the merits of his paintings, I suspect that they were not quite as bad as some would have them. I have earnestly tried to refrain from mindreading and psychoanalysis. Where the facts are obscure or where evidences on any important point are in conflict, I have said so. A list of the principal authorities and sources for each chapter is appended.

I should like to express my indebtedness to a number of persons who have in one way or another assisted me in the interesting labors of preparing this volume. First to Mr. Edmund Blunden who, by his sympathetic and scholarly "Introduction" and "Epilogue" to the World's Classics edition of the *Autobiography* first aroused my interest in Haydon. The Detroit Public Library, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Emory University Library, and the Library of Congress have been uniformly helpful and generous of their facilities. Professors Percival Hunt and Walter L. Myers of the University of Pittsburgh aided and encouraged me in an earlier study of Haydon. When the present work was in its initial stages, Professor Willard B. Pope was most generous and helpful, as were Mr. R. Burnet Morris of Teignmouth, Devon, and Mr. E. E. V. Wright, Librarian of the Royal Academy of Arts. My researches into the topography of Plymouth and the background of Haydon's early life were greatly assisted by information supplied me by the late Mr. C. W. Bracken, B.A., F.R.E.S., author of *A History of Plymouth and District*. I am also indebted to Miss Lilian J. Redstone and Miss Sylvia L. England of London. To my English correspondents in general, whose unselfish eagerness to assist an American researcher will always amaze me, I express my sincere thanks. My research has been supported in part by a grant from the American Philosophical Society (Penrose Fund), to which I am most grateful, as I am to the Regents of the University System of Georgia whose grant of a sabbatical quarter enabled me to complete the writing and final revision of the manuscript.

BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON

HISTORICAL PAINTER

CHAPTER
ONE.

Parentage and Youth

1786-1804

BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON in his *Autobiography*, somewhat in the manner of Tristram Shandy, relates the circumstances surrounding his own birth as he found them in his father's journal:

"[24th January, 1786] Very dirty weather; wind W.S.W. . . . Sally taken bad—hope it will end well with her. . .

"[25th January] Sally taken in labour, and at nine at night was delivered of a fine *boy*. Is as well as can be expected. . ."

The most important as well as the most trivial notes in my father's journal generally concluded with the state of the wind.

"Poor Mrs. Burgess died in childbed," he says in one part—"poor Tom Burgess much afflicted: wind W.N.W." I do not know how it is, but that statement of the wind always alleviated any pain I felt at the afflictions he related. There was a consolation in finding that the course of nature went on. One contrasted the cool perseverance of the wind doing its duty with the griefs of my father's friends.

Haydon's father, the author of this journal, was the son of Robert Haydon, "Printer and Stationer" of Market Place, Plymouth. Farther back than Robert Haydon, the ancestry of the painter is obscure. He claimed to be related to the Haydons of Cadhay, "one of the oldest families in Devon," but Frank Scott Haydon, his son, who was something of a genealogist, held this claim to be baseless. "The last of the Haydons of Cadhay," he says, "left no legitimate issue living at the time of his death."¹

¹Whatever the relationship with the Cadhay Haydons may have been, the name is an ancient one. A "Richard de Haydon, co. York" appears on the Hundred Rolls for 1273, and the Burks' *Encyclopedia of Heraldry* notes that the Haydon family of "Boughwood, Ebford, and Cadhay, co. Devon [is] traceable to the reign of Edward IV" and describes their arms and crest. The Haydon arms: "Ar. three bars gamelles az.; on a chief gu. a fesse dancettee or." The crest: "A lion ar. seizing a bull sa. armed of the first."

Haydon's great-grandfather, Gideon Haydon of Ottery, had, the painter told his friend Elmes, been killed while hunting and died intestate. Evidently a sporting squire of the old school, he "had been ruined by horse-racing and extravagance." His son, Robert Haydon, the painter's grandfather, was apprenticed in 1723 at the age of nine to a Mr. Savery of Slade, near Ivy Bridge, possibly a sign painter. He did well and in time became Mr. Savery's steward. Upon the death of his master, he set up a shop in Plymouth as bookseller and stationer. For many years he served as the parish clerk of Charles Church.

In the meantime, after vicissitudes which both Haydon and his son Frederic mention but do not describe, he had married Mary Baskerville of Cornwood, Devon, a descendant of John Baskerville, the famous printer. She was a woman, Haydon says, "of great energy and violent prejudices. She hated the French and she hated the Americans; and once, when an American prisoner, who had escaped, crept into her house and appealed to her for protection until pursuit was over, though alone in the house, she told him 'she hated all Americans,' and turned the poor fellow out into the street." Her money assisted Robert Haydon in starting his new venture. He was evidently a good business man and seems to have been fond of reading and the arts, although "a trifle morose in his temper." Haydon remembered "an old head of a brown complexion with a white beard" which his grandfather had painted.

Robert Haydon had intended his son, Benjamin, for the army. But in 1773 the old man was stricken with heart disease and died, and Benjamin, at fifteen, was recalled from his schooling to take over his father's business. Eight years later he married Miss Sarah Copley. The painter described his father, Benjamin Haydon, as "unambitious" and "affectionate." He was a "High Tory, a warm adherent of Pitt, and a staunch 'Church and State' man." There had been in his early life an occurrence which remains somewhat mysterious: apparently a man whom he had befriended betrayed his trust. In any event, "Disgusted with the world he plunged into dissipation to forget himself. The society of the educated and virtuous was not stimulating enough, and from one class to another he gradually sunk till nothing pleased or gratified him but the com-

pany of players." But this lapse of the painter's father did not do the business any permanent harm. He became a successful tradesman and later served his country honorably as a special correspondent to the Admiralty. Haydon's good-humored description of him is significant: so many of the qualities he ascribes to his father are to be found to a lesser degree in the character of the painter himself:

He loved his Church and King, believed England to be the only great country in the world, swore Napoleon won all his battles by bribery, did not believe that there was a poet, painter, musician, soldier, sailor, general, or statesman out of England, and at any time would have knocked down any man who dared to disbelieve him, or been burnt in Smithfield for the glory of his principles.

Haydon's mother, Sarah or "Sally," was the second daughter of the Rev. Benjamin Cobley, an Oxford graduate, curate of Shillingford and later rector of Dodbrook, Devon, who was killed in 1764 at the age of thirty-nine "by the fall of the sounding-board on his head while preaching." His widow, who had been Sarah Ley of Ide, was left with eight children and little else. But well-to-do relatives took charge of some of the children, and seven years later she was married again, this time to Joseph Chown of Ide. The careers of several of the children are noted by Haydon; he took particular pride in his uncle, Thomas Cobley. Through the influence of Admiral Mordwinoff, who as a captain in the Imperial Russian navy had married his sister, Harriet, young Cobley became an officer, finally a general in the Russian army. He served with distinction against the Turks. In later life, Haydon corresponded with his mother's elder sister, Mrs. Partridge, who had married "an opulent merchant" at Leghorn.

Sarah Haydon was herself, apparently, well within the romantic tradition. Her grandson Frederic described her as "a vivacious woman, of handsome presence, rapid apprehension, and many accomplishments. She was imperious, quick tempered, tender hearted to a degree, passionately attached to her children, not very judicious in their management, and of unbounded benevolence to all in distress. She has been known, on her walks in winter, to go up a dark passage, strip herself of her quilted petticoat and give it to some

poor shivering wretch who had begged her charity. I mention these traits," he continued, "because they were all, more or less, the inheritance of her son. He was equally passionate, impetuous, and humane."² Haydon felt a very close attachment to his mother; of this his pathetic and vivid description of her death, with all its romantic accompaniment, is eloquent evidence.

Two other members of the household deserve mention. Haydon had no brothers, but he was always very fond of his only sister, Harriet. She later married "a medical gentleman," and became Mrs. Haviland of Bridgewater, surviving Haydon by many years. His mother's brother, John Cobley, after a misspent youth, came to see the Haydons on a six weeks' visit, "never had energy to remove, got embedded in the family, stayed thirty years and died." "Uncle Cobley" became first a partner in Benjamin Haydon's business; then, on the senior Haydon's death, its owner. There is no evidence to support the opinion expressed by Frederic Haydon that he cheated the painter out of his proper inheritance, for Haydon never showed the slightest interest in bookselling or any other business.

Benjamin Robert Haydon was born, the first child and only son of a well-to-do shopkeeping family at 75 Market Place, now Whimble Street, Plymouth, at 9:00 P.M. on January 25, 1786.

His parents planned that he should in time inherit the excellent business which his grandfather had established. As the boy grew older and it became more and more evident that he and his sister Harriet were to be the only children, the respectable, middle-class hopes of his parents became increasingly centered in their son. He was to disappoint them sadly.

Of the infant Haydon there are only occasional glimpses. "I was, I believe, an excessively self-willed, passionate child," wrote Haydon in 1840. The only thing that could quiet him, he went on to observe, was a picture book. Frederic Wordsworth Haydon accuses his grandparents, almost bitterly, of spoiling their son. He is possibly right. But Haydon was no "mother's boy"; he was an active and imaginative youngster, pugnacious to a degree and fond

²It should, perhaps, be noted that Sarah Haydon died nineteen years before the author of this description was born.

of teasing and playing mischievous pranks on those around him.

Plymouth at the time of Haydon's boyhood was an exciting if not an altogether wholesome place for a child to grow up. The years from 1786 to 1804 were marked by an ever-increasing martial excitement in England. The French Revolution broke out in 1789; and four years later Great Britain joined the first coalition of nations against the Revolutionary government. In 1796 Spain declared war against England; and during the next two years the British admirals Jervis, Duncan, and Nelson were victorious on the seas. In 1803 Napoleon threatened to invade England. The times were a ferment of warlike activity; and Plymouth, second only to Portsmouth as a naval base, was always astir as the English fleets fitted, manned, and set out for scenes of battle, later to come back again to lick their wounds, refit, reman, and depart again for further engagements. Frederic Haydon remembered his father's reminiscences:

I have often heard him describe his recollections of those days, after the war had begun, how the Sound was filled with fighting-fleets preparing for sea, or triumphantly returning, battered and blackened, with shattered spars and torn sails, but with the captured ships of the enemy in tow; and how gallant frigates, amidst the cheers of thousands of people, were to be seen rounding the point into the inner harbour, with the Union Jack floating proudly above the Tricolour or the Spanish flag, while the guns of the batteries thundered out salutes in honour of the victors. . . . Men and women talked of nothing else but battles and sieges, and actions by sea or land, of Nelson, of Marat, Robespierre, Tom Paine, and, in time, Napoleon. Their children were even taken on board the captured ships to examine the effects of action, and habitually played with bone guillotines, cutting off the King of France's head—toys put together and sold by French prisoners. . . .

My father used to tell us how he remembered being taken on board one of our frigates docked for repairs after action, and being pointed out the trace of a shot which had passed fore and aft, taking off the heads of the captains of several guns, scattering blood and brains along the beams. A beautiful education for a child!

Quite possibly this premature acquaintance with the excitements of war and with scenes of bloodshed may have affected the development of the boy's romantic qualities. Possibly some of the pugnacity and ardent patriotism of Haydon's later years may have been the

result of these early experiences. The streets of Plymouth, already crowded with traditions of Drake and Gilbert and the foes of the Armada, now echoed to the feet of new heroes waging new wars. Once Haydon and a schoolfellow, walking near Stonehouse, saw a "little diminutive man, with a green shade over his eye" approaching them. "There's Nelson!" his companion cried. "Let us take off our hats," said Haydon. They did so, holding them out so far that he could not avoid seeing them. As the hero passed, he touched his own hat and smiled. "We boasted of this for months."

In 1792, when he was six years old, Haydon was entered in the Plymouth Grammar School where he remained until his fourteenth year.³ The headmaster, the Rev. Dr. John Bidlake, a native of Plymouth, has been described as "a man of strict religious principles, but not intolerant." He was rather different from the average schoolmaster of the period. For one thing, he was a man of letters and a dabbler in the arts. Some of his poetry found its way into the miscellanies of the time. Of his poems, which Haydon says "nobody ever read," one was on "The Sea," another, "The Year."⁴ The good doctor also played the organ and painted. His scholarship, while more than adequate, was not rigorous, and a good portion of Haydon's school time was spent in country excursions with his fellow pupils and their master; or with another pupil, Samuel Prout, who had also shown an inclination for art, in attending Dr. Bidlake's "caprices in painting."⁵ But for all the Doctor's kindness to them, the boys, with the usual cruelty of childhood, too often took advantage of the "little deformed man," whose "back was bent from fever," and played many tricks on him.

It is difficult to estimate the effect of such training—or lack of

³ According to Frederic Haydon, his father had been taught to read by Mrs. Hunn, an actress and long-time friend of the Haydons. Mrs. Hunn is best known as the mother of George Canning, the statesman. The painter described her as "a woman of masculine habits of mind, very clever, and a great talker."

⁴ This was published in 1813. Two years earlier he had lost his sight as a result of a stroke during the delivery of the Bampton Lectures at Oxford. His published works included seven volumes of poetry, a number of sermons and "discourses," a five-act tragedy in verse, a "moral tale," and an introduction to the study of geography. He was curate of Stonehouse Chapel, now St. George's Church, from 1785 to 1812. His B.A., M.A., and D.D. were from Oxford.

⁵ Prout (1783-1876) became a landscape painter of some minor importance. Ruskin esteemed him highly.

training—upon the future artist. Certainly it was no incentive toward classical discipline and restraint. Haydon himself seems, oddly enough, a little resentful toward Dr. Bidlake, for, after granting that he may have “fostered a love of nature,” the painter concludes: “All I know of hydraulics, pneumatics, astronomy, geography, and mechanics I learnt from him; but it is so very little, that I suspect he put us off with amusement for instruction.” After a moment of wonder at the curriculum which Haydon has outlined, one may glance at the other side of the picture—Dr. Bidlake’s comment made some years later on hearing of Haydon’s early successes in London. “‘He always promised well,’ said the doctor; ‘he was a stubborn boy, too, often difficult to tame.’”

In the meantime, at school and at home, the boy had been developing his taste for drawing. Dr. Bidlake was not only a man of some talent himself, he had also a kindly reputation for the encouragement of talented young men. Charles Locke Eastlake; Philip Rogers, a marine and landscape artist who later exhibited at the Royal Academy; and Nathaniel Howard, a charity boy who became “an elegant classical scholar, . . . a translator of Dante into blank verse,” and a Persian scholar of note, were protégés of his. It was probably under Bidlake’s instruction that Haydon first learned to draw. The country excursions and the Doctor’s mildly romantic nature poetry inclined the boy to landscape; and Haydon at fifty-four recalled his first drawing from nature—a view of an old farmhouse near Ridgway amidst its natural surroundings. In his “Memoirs of Benjamin Robert Haydon” (1820), James Elmes, who got his information direct from the painter, describes what he calls “Haydon’s first attempt at thinking.” This was “to caricature a boy who was always crying at the writing school: he drew a face crying, and a hand holding a cup to catch the tears. He carried it to school in the afternoon; it was glued by the usher to the ceiling, and whenever the boy cried, all fingers were pointed to the drawing. Wretched as this attempt must have been, yet the reputation he got among the boys for it first made his heart beat at the idea of being known. As he was drawing the head at home, his father looked over his shoulder, and said, ‘What are you about, sir? You are putting the eyes in the forehead.’”

But the boy's art soon took a more heroic bent under the influence of the head man of his father's binding room, a Neapolitan named Fenzi. This "fine, muscular, lazzaroni-like fellow" scoffed at the boy's pastoral art and exhorted him to draw "'de feegoore,'" supporting this advice by displaying a bared, muscled arm and descanting upon the glories of the Vatican, of Raphael and Michelangelo. The boy's imagination was fired, and upon the further advice of Northcote, a fellow townsman, brother of the painter and a frequenter of the reading room which was a part of the Haydon shop, he began to study anatomy and prepare himself for High Art. Another impetus to noble expression had been the wreck of the *Dutton*, an East Indiaman, on the rocks below the Citadel on January 26, 1796. The crew had been heroically saved. For some time the wreck held together, battered by the sea, and Haydon and his friend Prout sat on the cliffs and watched her go down. Both resolved to paint the awful scene; both tried, and, we are told, failed.⁶

His parents, to their later regret, were rather proud of these early evidences of talent. Among the bourgeoisie, artistic gifts are always welcomed as polite accomplishments. Art is not, of course, to be taken seriously as a proper vocation for a man; but the ability to draw is a graceful acquirement none the less. Seventy-five years later legions of virtuous middle class young ladies were to paint endless china, and boys like Kipps were encouraged to carve wood and study ceramics. Thus it happened that Haydon senior, vain of his son's sketches, displayed them proudly to his best customers; and when the boy began to act out his imaginings on a homemade stage for which he had painted the scenes and evolved the dramas, his parents looked on with tolerant amusement. These romantic activities—the painting, drawing, and play-acting—continued for some time unhindered, until at last the bookseller came to himself and was alarmed.

Once aware of the seriousness of the situation, Haydon's father removed the boy from the mild and kindly charge of Dr. Bidlake, and put him under the more rigorous discipline of All Hallows School at Honiton. The headmaster, the Rev. William Hayne, an Oxford graduate, was a somewhat severe man with a high reputa-

⁶In 1819, Prout exhibited *The Indiaman Ashore* at the Water-Colour Society.

tion for scholarship. Haydon was at once found wanting in the fundamentals of classical grammar, and was put to studying Phaedrus, later, in normal course, progressing into Virgil and Homer. Haydon remained at Honiton about two years; then, when Hayne transferred to the Plympton Grammar School, in 1801, Haydon accompanied him.

This latter school had an excellent reputation. It stood near the Church of Plympton St. Maurice in the little town of Plympton, some five miles northeast of Plymouth. It had been founded in 1658. The school itself was "a large and ancient building standing in a yard at the back of the [Master's] House,—having much the appearance of a Chapel." One of its early masters had been Sir Joshua Reynolds's father, Samuel Reynolds, and the great painter himself had been born in the Master's House and had attended the school. The Gothic school building was still standing in 1933 and was still in use as an adjunct to the modern school. The Master's House, however, was torn down in 1871. A wall tablet was placed to mark its site.

Haydon progressed very well at Plympton, and during his last six months there was head boy of the school. All drawing, painting, and play-acting had been placed under strict interdict by Haydon senior; but with paper, ink, and pens available, such prohibitions were to a romanticist incentives to revolt. The boy was soon at his drawing again, caricaturing his schoolmates, sketching the parish clerk at church, and once—after the boys had seen a hunting party in the hills—drawing the hunt with burnt sticks all around the walls of the hall. This last attempt was so successful that Hayne left it in place for some weeks before having the marks removed.

Haydon was perhaps inspired to picture the hunt thus grandly by the sketch which was still dimly visible on the ceiling of the school room which Sir Joshua himself as a boy had drawn there. Haydon loved to lean back in his bench and contemplate it. He spent his allowance on caricatures, which he copied, and—even thus early a propagandist and teacher—he so interested the other boys in drawing that they actually formed a class. "One half-holiday," he writes, "as there was a dead silence in the playground, Haynes [*sic*], apprehending mischief, bolted into the school and

found the boys drawing under my direction with the greatest quiet, I marching about and correcting as I went."

Thus for all his interest in art, this fourteen year old boy must not be thought of as a shy, feminine creature. He "marched about . . . correcting," not only at Plympton but later in London and throughout his life. Those who knew him during his school days remembered him as a high-spirited, manly boy, generous, head-strong, and imprudent, with a passionate love of fair play, and no disinclination for a good fight. He liked to ride. He was a strong swimmer and a skillful diver; he loved, he said, "to have fathoms of deep water" under him. It is certainly an error to identify artistic sensibility with effeminacy—witness John Keats; and throughout Haydon's life a vigorous pugnacity and a sensitive perception of beauty existed side by side as essential elements of his character.

With the completion of about a year's stay at Plympton Grammar School, Haydon's classical education ended. He had gained a good, though by no means a commanding foundation in the classics. In mathematics, a subject for which, with Keats and Lamb and many of the romantics, he retained a violent aversion, he was weak. Italian he later learned by himself. In English history he was well informed, and his love for reading and his interest in English literature were life-long. But by 1802, in his sixteenth year, Haydon's school days were over. To prepare him more definitely for the business, his father placed him for six months under an accountant at Exeter to be perfected in keeping accounts. Haydon reports this experience succinctly: "Here I did little. The master's son taught crayon-drawing, and I drew under him for a short time, but was more celebrated for electrifying the cat, killing flies by sparks, and doing everything and anything but my duty." Frederic Haydon says that his father during this period was "as wild as an unbacked colt . . . in love with every girl he met." James Elmes does not mention the painter's interest in girls, but he does accuse him of "constantly reading Virgil" instead of attending to his proper duties. Whatever he did, it is clear that Haydon at this time displayed no more classical mastery of accounts than he did in later life.

His return to Plymouth was not happy. He was bound to his
 . . 10

father for seven years and entered at once upon his work. The senior Haydon, no doubt, breathed freely again.

There is a contemporary description of Plymouth as it was about the time of Haydon's return from Exeter to take up the serious business of life.⁷

Nearly opposite the end of [the narrow street then called] Market Street, which opened into the Place (the awkward Guild-hall being on the right hand, ascending), stood the house of Haydon's father, a bookseller and printer, in partnership with his brother-in-law, bearing the firm name of Haydon and Copley. The house was spacious, the shop large, and there was a private entrance on the eastern side. In this shop and round the door congregated the newsmongers of the town, generally about noon. It was war time; all was in activity in so large a garrison town. Among the loungers at Haydon's were a number of naval men. . . . Among many of the inhabitants who used to lounge there was the brother of Northcote the painter. . . . Generally at a desk behind the counter, or in a back parlour, old Haydon was to be seen; a man, in person, not much resembling his son. His fingers were rigid from some affection of the muscles, and [he was] much of an invalid. He was a shrewd, clever creature, had been a great rake in his youth, and succeeded his father in the business he in time designed for the artist.

But young Haydon, for whom the business was "designed," did not take at all kindly to it. Bookkeeping and accounts and the petty salesmanship of a bookseller's clerk had no appeal for the proud, somewhat spoiled boy whose sole delights had been drawing, reading, dreaming, and vigorous outdoor sports. "I hated day-books, ledgers, bill-books, and cash-books"; Haydon wrote with the vigor of a true romantic. "I hated standing behind the counter, and insulted the customers; I hated the town and the people in it. I saw my father had more talent than the asses he was obliged to bend to; I knew his honourable descent, and I despised the vain fools that patronized him."

After more than a year of this, the breaking point was reached. One day a customer offered the young clerk less than the asked price for a Latin dictionary. Haydon, insulted, slammed the book

⁷This description is of Plymouth as it appeared to Redding in 1809, seven years after Haydon's return. Some changes had taken place during that time: Haydon had left for London, his mother had died, his father was feeble, his Uncle Copley had been taken into partnership: otherwise the picture will serve. The Haydon house and shop no longer stands.

back on its shelf and stalked out of the shop without a word, leaving his father to soothe the startled customer—and complete the sale. Haydon never went back to his duties. His father pleaded without effect. It was a prosperous business, an honorable one. Haydon was the only heir; the family's hopes were all built around him. But he was obdurate. "I could not help it. Why? Because my whole frame was convulsed when I thought of being a great painter." Already the clear call to a romantic career had "pealed authoritatively through his being."

Arguments proving useless, the father tried coercion, always bad strategy against a romantic boy. Haydon grew even more set in his resolve to have no more to do with the business. Aunts and uncles were consulted, their advice brought to bear, but the boy showed no sign of weakening. An armed truce, lasting well over six months, was the result. Haydon's only supporters among his family were his mother and sister, neither of whom, of course, dared openly to plead his cause. Among the townspeople, his friend Reynolds, a watchmaker, also encouraged him. Then an illness intervened, which resulted in a serious disorder of the boy's eyes. For six weeks he was virtually blind; then he gradually recovered, but never fully regained his normal sight. The difficulty seemed to have solved itself: surely painting as a career was now out of the question. But Haydon's reply was worthy of W. E. Henley: "I can see enough . . . and, see or not see, a painter I'll be, and if I am a great one without seeing, I shall be the first."

Throughout the rest of his life, Haydon had trouble with his eyes. Spectacles later aided him considerably and enabled him to carry on his work, although under great disadvantage. Tom Taylor quotes the following description of Haydon's method of painting, a method which was believed to account for the "disproportions and irregularities observable in his pictures and so difficult to explain in one of his undoubted knowledge of anatomical construction."⁸

He wore concave glasses, so concave as greatly to diminish objects.

⁸Frederic Haydon gives in somewhat more detail a similar description of his father's painting procedure. He concludes: "How he ever contrived to paint a head or a limb in proportion is a mystery to me, for it is clear that he had lost his natural sight in boyhood. Without his glasses he could see nothing distinctly. He is, as he said, the first blind man who ever successfully painted pictures."

Through these glasses he used to contemplate his model and picture from a distance. He would then run up to his picture, raise his glasses, and paint, using the naked eye. He would then run to a mirror and examine the reflection of his picture, often through two pairs of such concave spectacles, and then would return again as before, raising the spectacles to work on his picture.

Meanwhile, another event had strengthened his resolution. One of his father's apprentices, Ambrose Bowden Johns, had left the business and set up for himself as a landscape painter. Johns had purchased plaster casts of the Discobolos and Apollo. These casts, the first Haydon had ever seen, stirred him deeply, and he studied them until his eyes ached. Johns, too, had a library, and it was there, as Haydon afterward recalled, that he first came across Sir Joshua Reynolds's *Discourses on Art*. In the *Discourses*, Reynolds advances the theory that application and industry in art will compensate for a deficiency in genius. Haydon was later to recognize and combat the obvious fallacy of this,⁹ but at the time he accepted it eagerly. His last fear vanished. Now he could be certain of success in art, for surely he had already demonstrated that he had sufficient energy and application to become a great painter. The next morning at breakfast he delivered his ultimatum to the assembled family. The house was again in an uproar, but Haydon was firm.

Mindful of Northcote's advice to study anatomy, Haydon searched his father's shop for anatomical works, and finally, seeing a copy of Albinus advertised for sale in the library of Dr. Farr of Plymouth Hospital, he went to the sale, purchased the book for £2,10s, and had it charged to the business. The boy then "threw himself on his mother's mercy, by letting her know what he had done"; and when the book arrived, his father paid for it, "with black looks. Oh!" wrote Haydon, "the delight of hurrying it away to my bedroom, turning over the plates, copying them out, learning the origin and insertion of the muscles, and getting my sister to

⁹In his *Table Talk*, Haydon says: "Mengs was right in affirming that such principles would mislead youth because, induced to pursue an art which required original parts, in the hope that by application alone they might attain distinction, they would not detect their errors until years had been wasted in vain, and the finest part of their lives passed never to be recalled. Application will not give genius, though genius is of no use without application."

hear me! She and I used to walk about the house with our arms round each other's necks—she saying, 'How many heads to the deltoid?' 'Where does it rise?' 'Where is it inserted?' and I answering. By this means, in the course of a fortnight, I got by heart all the muscles of the body."

This interest in the study of anatomy had made its appearance earlier. While at Plympton Grammar School, according to one who knew him, "he expressed a wish to join the medical profession; but the sight of an operation, performed at Plymouth Hospital, at once deterred him, so shocked was he at the sufferings of the patient." We are also told that Haydon, during these early years, "used to go to the sea side, where people bathed, and endeavor to find out every muscle as it acted on the living form."

One morning Haydon's mother came to him with a tearful request. His father's health, never strong, had now definitely begun to fail, "the sad effect," Haydon unfeelingly remarks, "of trying to drown remembrance in wine." She needed her son's support; he must not leave her now. Had Haydon been an ordinary sentimentalist, he must have complied. But the true romantic is ever ruthless. He assured his mother of his tender love, but felt, he said, "impelled by something I could not resist . . . I must be a painter." Then, after she had gone, "I fell upon my knees and prayed God to forgive me if I was cruel, but to grant me firmness, purity, and piety to go on in the right way for success." This prayer, the first of many recorded in the *Autobiography*, is characteristic in both its egotism and its sincerity.

At last his parents consented. Haydon should go up to London to study for two years at the Royal Academy on trial, with £20 to start on. Lodgings were taken for him at 342 the Strand, at the corner of Catherine Street; and on May 13, 1804, young Haydon, his clothes, his books and colors all packed, reserved his place in the mail coach for the next day.

The evening was passed in silent musing. Affection for home was smothered, not extinguished, in me: I thought only of LONDON—Sir Joshua—Drawing—Dissection—and High Art.

The next day I ate little, spoke less, and kissed my mother many times. When all my things were corded and packed ready for the mail, I hung

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about my mother with a fluttering at my heart, in which duty, affection and ambition were struggling for the mastery.

As evening approached I missed my mother. At last the guard's horn announced the coming mail; I rushed upstairs, called her dear name, and was answered only by violent sobbings from my own bed-room. She could not speak—she could not see me. "God bless you, my dear child," I could just make out in her sobbings. The guard became impatient; I returned slowly downstairs with my heart too full to speak, shook my father by the hand, got in, the trunks were soon on the top, the whip cracked, the horses pranced and started off—my career for life had begun!

[illegible]

yards of St. Andrew's, the mother church of Plymouth), did not recognize this "gaudy" and "flimsy" structure as a house of worship. The guard, misunderstanding his question, had told him it was Somerset House, then, as Haydon was well aware, the home of the Royal Academy of Arts. "Ah!" he thought; "there's the Exhibition, where I'll be soon!"

After finding his lodgings, bathing, dressing, and breakfasting, Haydon set out for the Exhibition. The beadle at the church, amused, directed him aright, and in a few minutes he was at Somerset House where he "squeezed in, mounted the stairs to the great room, and looked about for historical pictures." The only two paintings he later remembered were John Opie's *Gil Blas* and a shipwrecked sailor boy by Richard Westall. "I marched away, saying, 'I don't fear you,' inquired for a plaster shop, found one in Drury Lane, bought the Laocoon's head, with some arms, hands and feet, darkened my window, unpacked my Albinus, and before nine the next morning was hard at work, drawing from the round, studying Albinus and breathing aspirations for 'High Art' and defiance to all opposition."

For the next three months, according to his own statement, Haydon's solitary and intensive study continued. James Elmes in his "Memoirs of Haydon" says that the painter "never saw any public place but the [Boydell] Shakespeare gallery for several months after his arrival. . . . For an entire fortnight he . . . never left his room; and the people of the house used to send up and beg he would not kill himself." Elmes also reports what Haydon was later to write in his *Autobiography*: "I was once so long without speaking to a human creature that my gums became painfully sore from the clenched tightness of my teeth." The boy must have delighted in the romantic spectacle he was making. Meanwhile, at Cawthorne's in the Strand, he had discovered John Bell's work on the bones, joints, and muscles. This inspired him to further excesses of drawing and study. His letters of introduction, his plans to enter the Academy schools were neglected. Not for several months did he make use of them.

I was resolved to be a great painter, to honour my country, to rescue the art from that stigma of incapacity which was impressed upon it. . . . I

never doubted my capacity to realize [such aspirations]. . . I had made up my mind what to do. I wanted no guide. To apply night and day, to seclude myself from society, to keep the Greeks and great Italians in view, and to endeavor to unite form, colour, light, shadow, and expression was my constant determination.

The state of English art in 1804 was not a particularly happy one. The generation of the old masters, of Reynolds and Gainsborough, had passed, leaving only John Singleton Copley and Benjamin West to carry on into the new century. But these men were old and past their prime. Copley, then 67, lived on until 1815. West, a year younger than he, had been a Foundation Member of the Royal Academy and since Sir Joshua's death had been its President, as which he continued, except for a year's interim (1805), until his death in 1820. Otherwise, the old masters had gone. Gainsborough and Reynolds, both Foundation Members of the Academy, had died before the century opened. Romney, master of portrait and history painting, died in 1802. The tempestuous Irishman, James Barry, extravagant painter of room-size historical pictures, died in 1806. His memory Haydon was later to defend, and his career in many respects Haydon's was to parallel in romantic frustration.

The old masters were dead or dying, and the generation which had followed them was in control of English art. The great English painters of the 18th century had done much to elevate and dignify the national reputation in portrait and landscape, and, to a lesser extent, in history. But the 18th century had been a time of liberal and cultured patronage: as the 19th approached, the tide was ebbing fast. Patrons were proportionately fewer, and with some exceptions, the chief supporters of English painting were wealthy bourgeois, by-products of the economic revolution, who had but one artistic desire—portraits of themselves and their families. And as public galleries and collections were entirely lacking, the successors of the old masters turned almost to a man to portraiture.

Landscape painting, which had been given so excellent a foundation by Gainsborough and Wilson, suffered almost total extinction, the only notable exceptions among the new generation being John Crome and Sir George Beaumont, the latter a wealthy and cultured

amateur who was himself a most liberal patron. It was not until the coming of Constable and Turner, contemporaries of Haydon, that landscape regained its high place in English art. The painting of historical and poetical subjects on the grand scale, "High Art," had to some extent occupied Northcote and Opie, but they had been forced to turn to portraiture in order to live. The only painter of note who had the courage to practice High Art, almost exclusively, in the face of commercial failure was Henry Fuseli, Haydon's first master; and it may be doubted that, with his peculiar gifts, he would have had any success as a portrait painter. Genre paintings had some vogue at the beginning of the century as their cabinet size made them suitable for domestic decoration, and their anecdotal interest secured for them, when engraved, a market among the printsellers and the periodicals. Stothard, Morland, and Smirke were the chief genre painters; but it remained for Edwin Landseer, and David Wilkie, Haydon's contemporary and friend, to establish the domestic anecdote as a favorite English form. The other leading artists of this generation, the immediate inheritors of the old masters, were almost all portrait painters: Beechey, Hoppner, Raeburn, Lawrence, Shee, and a score of others.

Above all the artists of the period hovered the influence of Sir Joshua Reynolds. His discourses on art were looked upon as gospel. In them he had preached the superiority of High Art over portraiture and landscape: in his life he had practiced portraiture almost exclusively. Most of those who followed him were content to do the same. But Haydon, at least, was to accept Reynolds's ideal, and like so many of his romantic brethren was to find ruin the reward for non-conformity.

The Royal Academy of Arts has never been more firmly entrenched than it was during Haydon's early years in London. Founded under royal charter in 1768, the Academy had from the first enrolled among its members and associates most of the distinguished names in English painting, sculpture, architecture, and engraving. But mediocrity was also represented, a jealous mediocrity, inclined, many independent artists felt, to discriminate against outsiders at its annual exhibitions. The very nature of the Academy was such as to foster this unfairness. Its forty members,

as established in the charter, had the power of self-election, subject only to the approval of the crown. Long before Haydon's attacks upon it, the Academy had been torn again and again by internal strife. Sir Joshua himself, during a quarrel, had offered to resign both his presidency and his membership; Barry, the historical painter, had been expelled in 1799; the Academy in 1803 had been rent by a disagreement over the powers of the Council, a dispute which was settled only by the intervention of the king, who succeeded in restoring surface harmony. These were but a few of the instances of Academical discord: quarrels between individual members were even more numerous.

But peaceful or troublous, the Royal Academy unquestionably dominated English art. In France, when the official art of the French Academy held similar powers, there arose a group of outside artists whose popularity enabled them rapidly to overcome the intrenched power of the Academy; but in England there was no such independent group. Non-members, particularly the younger ones, rebelled, of course, at the sinecure of the Academicians—just as Haydon, Jackson, and Wilkie later rebelled—but election to an Associateship with the prospect of becoming a full-fledged Academician was usually enough to stop any outbreaks of radical independence. Certainly such measures succeeded with Wilkie and Jackson, the former of whom became R.A. in 1811, the latter in 1817. And had Haydon been content to possess himself in patience and suffer the slights and injustices with which he felt the Academy met his rising fame, he too might have received the accolade.

One chief factor in the Academy's preeminence was, of course, its annual exhibition, which extended from the first Monday in May to the first Monday in August. Until the opening of the British Institution in 1806, there was no other gallery, except, possibly, an auction room or rented exhibition room, where a painter could display his productions. And as the hanging committee was, naturally enough, composed entirely of Academicians, their monopoly was complete. It was even reported by Farington, in 1808, that the Academy was considering limiting its exhibitions to its own members, "that they may not be degraded by the bad works which are annually sent in."

But there was another and more favorable feature of the Acad-

emy. When it had been founded in 1768, it was primarily to fill the need for schools of art. On January 2, 1769 the Academy schools were opened; and it was on this occasion that Sir Joshua Reynolds delivered the first of his celebrated discourses. These schools have continued with varying fortunes to the present time. Just before Haydon's arrival in London they had undergone a drastic and thoroughgoing reform. Joseph Wilton, the Keeper, who was 78 years old and infirm, had allowed discipline to become lax and the standards of drawing to slacken. In 1800 a committee was appointed to investigate the schools, and the reforms which it recommended were so severe that by 1804 all but a few of the students had dropped out. Among those who remained were Raimbach the engraver, Richard Smirke, and Constable, the latter a probationer.

Aside from the Academy and, to a very limited extent, the British Museum, both of whose collections were meagre and hedged about with almost insuperable restrictions, there were no public galleries available to students in 1804. The early part of the century saw a growing influx of foreign art treasures into England. The disruption of Italy had thrown many of the finest works of the Italian masters into the market; and although the hazards of importation in war time were considerable because of the activities of French privateers and warships, a large proportion of English purchases abroad arrived safely. These were augmented by further treasures seized from captured French vessels, bound toward Paris on similar errands. But these great paintings found their way into the hands of wealthy private collectors, of whom there were many in and about London. Robert Udny was one; his collection upon his death was offered for sale to the Royal Academy—and promptly refused. Other fine collections were those of Angerstein (which in 1824 became the nucleus for the National Gallery), of Sir John Leicester, and of the Marquis of Stafford. There was also, of course, the Boydell Gallery, a collection of some hundred sixty-seven paintings, many of them of large size, illustrating the works of Shakespeare. To paint these Alderman Boydell had commissioned over thirty of the leading artists of the age, at an expense of more than £350,000, and had built a special gallery to house them. But these private collections at this time offered little benefit to English students, and in no way offset the need for public galleries.

The first serious break in the solid front of Academy domination came with the opening exhibition of the British Institution for the Development of the Fine Arts (commonly called the British Institution or British Gallery) in 1806. This organization was established with an imposing list of wealthy and titled subscribers and was destined to enjoy a long and beneficial existence. It had purchased the old Boydell Shakespeare Gallery in Pall Mall at an expense of £4500 with a further expenditure of £800 in preparing the rooms for the exhibition. The three galleries available, the North Room, the South Room, and the Middle Room, were, during the 1806 exhibition, devoted almost entirely to historical and landscape paintings, with only a few specimens of genre and still life. No portraits were hung in this first exhibition. The wealth of its patrons and the popularity of its exhibitions made the British Gallery an immediate favorite with dissenting artists; but it may be noted that as early as 1818, artists had begun to complain about unfairness in its administration. Haydon himself was violently embittered when the premiums were withdrawn in 1812, and by 1831 criticism of the Institution was general. These later criticisms came about largely as a result of an intelligent and helpful practice which the British Institution inaugurated in the year of its founding. At the close of its first exhibition of the works of contemporary artists (many of whom were Academicians who could not be expected to resist this new and tempting market), the directors exhibited a small but choice collection of old masters, lent by various patrons of the Institution. This exhibition was open only to students and painters and offered them a unique opportunity to study and to copy from the finest examples of painting, undisturbed. No one, of course, could take exception to this. But in 1815 an exhibition of old masters was opened to the public, and many artists—particularly the Academicians, Haydon says—fearful of a loss of prestige, objected strenuously. On the whole, however, the British Institution performed a noble service to English artists both by widening the market for native art and by affording unexampled opportunities for students to peruse and copy the works of the masters of the Italian, French, Dutch, Spanish, and English schools. That Haydon profited in both respects is apparent to any reader of his *Autobiography* and journals.

The Sunday after his arrival Haydon went to St. Mary-le-Strand Church and prayed for consecration and strength to carry out his high purpose. Haydon's life-long devotion to religion, characterized by this act, has often been condemned. To certain minds, the recognition and invocation of a higher power are sure evidence of either superstition or hypocrisy. Haydon's prayers, with which the pages of the *Autobiography* and the journals are perhaps too plentifully supplied, have been deprecated as insincere or unreal. The true religious feeling, says the *Quarterly Review* in commenting on this point, "does not compose elaborate forms of prayer, copy them carefully into journals, and leave them to executors for publication, mixed up with all the promiscuous trash of common life."² This well-bred view is repeated, sometimes with more definite reflections on Haydon's sincerity, by several of the commentators on his life. The fact is that Haydon's religion was of a most ardent and personal variety, not the cold, deistic philosophy which was the fashionable religion of his time. Such divergent religious types as the patriarchal Hebrew and the Catholic mystic are alike in one respect at least: God to them is present in all aspects of life, as truly in its "promiscuous trash" as in its sublimities. Haydon's prayers are much too concrete and personal in their appeals to please a cultivated classicist in religion. One could not, for example, expect such a person to approve of the prayer which Haydon poured forth in 1812, when, oppressed by ever mounting debts, he was enabled by a superlatively kind landlord to continue his great painting, *The Judgment of Solomon*. It is included here, despite its length, for in many respects it is typical of Haydon's appeals to the Almighty.

O God Almighty, who so mercifully assisted me during my last picture; who enabled me to combat and conquer so many difficulties and gave me strength of mind superior to all, desert me not now, O Lord, desert me not now.

O Lord, Thy mercy is infinite; to Thee will I again cry.

Assist me, O God! My difficulties are again accumulating and will yet accumulate; grant me strength of mind and body again to meet, again to conquer them. Soften the hearts of those at whose mercy I am; let them not harass me, let them not interrupt me. Grant that I may be able to

²A note to this same article calls the publication by Dr. Strahan of Samuel Johnson's prayers "wholly unjustifiable." From this one may discern the acute religious sensibilities of the reviewer.

proceed unchecked by sickness with my present great picture, and conclude it as it ought to be concluded. Let not the progress of this picture be disgraced by the vice which disgraced the last [wasted time]. Let me be pure, holy and virtuous—industrious, indefatigable and firm.

Enable me to conceive all the characters with the utmost possible acuteness and dignity, and execute them with the utmost possible greatness and power.

O God, in every point, let my intellectual power rise to the degree wanted for excellence and my vigour of body be proportioned to the fatigue.

O God, in pecuniary emergencies Thou has never deserted me; still in such moments stretch forth Thy protecting hand. Amen. Amen.

O God, spare the life of my dear father, till I am independent and able to take my sister, and much longer if Thou pleasest to delight me, but till then, I entreat Thee, till then, Thou Great Being and merciful God.

O God, let me not die in debt. Grant I may have the power to pay all with honour before Thou callest me hence. Grant this for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

Now the propriety, the excellence of taste displayed in including anything of this sort in one's autobiography may perhaps be questioned, but propriety and classical restraint are not necessarily attributes of vital religion.

After three months or more of solitary study, Haydon made use of the letter of introduction which he had brought with him, addressed to Prince Hoare, Esq. Hoare, a friend of Haydon's uncle, Mr. Copley, had prepared himself as a youth for a career in painting, but finding his talents "of the feeblest order" he had turned to the writing and adaptation of farces. In this he had made a considerable success; and the wide acquaintanceship and experience of this man of 49 was of great usefulness to the young student.³ Haydon called, presented his letter, and was kindly received. Hoare returned the call, examined the young man's drawings, and gave him letters to Northcote and Opie. As the former was a Plymouth man, Haydon decided to visit him first at his house at 39 Argyle Street. His description of the visit is amusing: "I was shown first into a dirty gallery, then upstairs into a dirtier painting-room, and there, under a high window with the light shining full on his bald grey head, stood a diminutive wizened figure in an old blue-striped

³ Later, he lent Haydon books on art and introduced him to many prominent persons. Hoare was himself the author of a number of essays and books on art. He died in 1834.

dressing-gown, his spectacles pushed up on his forehead. Looking keenly at me with his little shining eyes, he opened the letter, read it, and with the broadest Devon dialect said: 'Zo, you mayne tu bee a peinter doo-e? what zort of peinter?' 'Historical painter, sir.' 'Heestoricaul peinter! why yee'll starve with a bundle of straw under yeer head!' "

Then, after an "incomprehensible anecdote" regarding his acquaintance with Haydon's father and grandfather, the old painter continued: " 'Mr. Hoare zays you're studying anatomy; that's no use—Sir Joshua didn't know it; why should you want to know what he didn't?' " " 'But Michel Angelo did, sir.' "

" 'Michel Angelo! What's he tu du here? you must peint pertraits here!' This roused me, and I said, clinching my mouth, 'But I won't.' 'Won't?' screamed the little man; 'but you *must*! you vather isn't a monied man, is he?' 'No, sir; but he has a good income, and will maintain me for three years.' 'Will he? hee'd better make 'ee mentein yeezelf!' A beautiful specimen of brother artist, thought I. 'Shall I bring you my drawings, sir?' 'Ees, you may,' said he, and I took my leave.

"I was not disconcerted. He looked too much at my head, I thought, to be indifferent." For Haydon was always vain of his "antique head."

Immediately after leaving Northcote, he proceeded to Opie's house in Berners Street. "I was shown into a clean gallery of masculine and broadly painted pictures. After a minute down came a coarse-looking intellectual man. He read my letter, eyed me quietly, and said: 'You are studying anatomy—master it—were I your age [Opie was then 43], I would do the same.' My heart bounded at this; I said: 'I have just come from Mr. Northcote, and he says I am wrong, sir.' 'Never mind what *he* says,' said Opie; 'he doesn't know it himself, and would be very glad to keep you as ignorant.' I could have hugged Opie."

But Haydon distrusted Opie's advice that he take one particular man as his teacher. His doubts were confirmed on his next visit to

⁴Solomon Hart in his *Reminiscences* remarks that Northcote "seldom made use of the human body. When painting the hands he would often set before him plaster casts; his lay figure often took the place of the living body."

Northcote who warned the young man that Opie wanted to teach him himself and get his money; so Haydon did not put himself under Opie, although that seems to have been his father's desire.

Thus Haydon, already commanding his own career, sifted the conflicting advice which he had received, accepted that which agreed with his already formed conclusions, and determined to follow his own course. Northcote's attempt to discourage him from history painting was a gage of battle to all his romantic instincts. But the visits to these venerable artists continued. Northcote had a reputation for dry and cynical humor in conversation, a trait which had earned him the sobriquet "Aquafortis,"⁵ and Haydon enjoyed his talk. Through Northcote, Haydon secured an introduction to Robert Smirke, a prominent Royal Academician, who, Haydon says, "received me most tenderly—he felt interested at my enthusiasm, applauded my plans, lent me drawings, and was really a father to me in the Art. . . . I always went in better spirits from Smirke—better informed from Opie—and exasperated from little Aqua-Fortis."⁶

Wilton had died in 1803; Smirke had been elected Keeper of the Academy early in 1804, but the King had declined to accept his nomination because of Smirke's democratic, even revolutionary tendencies. Henry Fuseli, a man of 64, was then appointed to the post and took his place early in January 1805 at the reopening of the schools after the Christmas holidays. Haydon had met Fuseli at the instance of Prince Hoare and had been vastly impressed by the experience. Fuseli, too, was evidently pleased by Haydon's drawings and anatomical studies, and invited the young man to present himself at the Academy schools.

At the Royal Academy schools to which Haydon went on the first night of Fuseli's keepership, instruction was offered in painting, sculpture, and architecture. The curriculum in painting was divided

⁵Some examples of Northcote's conversational skill have been preserved in William Hazlitt's *Conversations of James Northcote*; and in Ernest Fletcher, ed., *Conversations of James Northcote R.A. with James Ward on Art and Artists*, (London, 1901).

⁶Robert Smirke (1752-1845), the father of Sir Robert Smirke, the eminent architect, was probably the author of the notorious *Catalogue Raisonné* of the British Institution exhibition of 1815. Neither Haydon nor Hazlitt, both of whom abominated the work and its writer, seems to have known who wrote it.

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between the Antique School and the Life School, the former under the guidance of the Keeper who had his quarters in Somerset House and had general charge of all the schools. The Life School, for the more advanced students, was taught by an annually elected body of members, the "Visitors," each of whom acted as sole master of the School for one month. The room was "spacious and lofty; the gloom of its background [was] deepened by stained and smoky walls, and broken only by dusty casts." A student at the schools about this time describes the Visitors, who, he says, "made their appearance in full costume. It is true that with the smoke from the candles and lamps, and the dust from the chalk, the dresses of our respected instructors used seldom to exhibit any marks of splendour after their attendance"; but there was evidently a dignity and seriousness about the proceedings which must have impressed the young student.

Students who wished to be admitted to instruction had first to qualify as probationers by submitting "a chalk drawing, not less than 2 feet high, of an undraped antique statue. . . . They must also send two drawings of a figure anatomized, one showing the bones and the other the muscles, with the names of several bones, muscles, and tendons." With these examples of his ability, the candidate had also to submit a letter from some responsible person, attesting to his moral character and fitness. The probationary period lasted two to three months, after which time the drawings done in the school were compared with those previously submitted. If the results seemed favorable, the probationer was admitted as a full-fledged student and received a circular ivory ticket engraved with his name and the date of his admission. Other privileges were also his, as Charles Robert Leslie told his sister in a letter on April 4, 1813: "I have lately been made a Student in the Academy. . . . I have now access to the library every Monday, beside the privilege of wearing my hat in the Academy, and coming in with a greater swagger than before." Students were also encouraged to attend the lectures on painting, sculpture, architecture, and perspective, delivered by eminent Academicians, "Professors" of these several subjects.

Henry Fuseli, Haydon's first and only real teacher in painting,

was a strange and eccentric character. He was born in Zurich in 1741 and had emigrated to England in 1765. There he had come under the influence of Sir Joshua Reynolds who had persuaded him to forsake his vocation in literature for one in painting. Fuseli was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1788, a full member in 1790. In 1799 he was elected to the Professorship of Painting, but he relinquished that office in 1804⁷ in order to assume the Keepership which he retained until his death in 1825. Fuseli, it has been generally agreed, was a bad craftsman. His paintings were wild and disordered; his themes were the terrible and the grotesque. Haydon thus described his appearance and technique:

He said a subject should interest, astonish, or move; if it did none of these it was worth "noding by Gode." He had a strong Swiss accent and a guttural energetic diction. . . . He swore roundly. . . . He was about five feet five inches high, had a compact little form, stood firmly at his easel, painted with his left hand . . . and being very near-sighted, and too vain to wear glasses, used to dab his beastly brush into the oil, and sweeping round the palette in the dark take up a great lump of white, red, or blue, as it might be, and plaster it over a shoulder or face. Sometimes in his blindness he would put a hideous smear of Prussian blue in his flesh, and then, perhaps, discovering his mistake, take a bit of red to deaden it, and then prying close in, turn round to me and say: "By Gode, dat's a fine purple! it's vary like Corregio, by Gode!" and then, all of a sudden, he would burst out with a quotation from Homer, Tasso, Dante, Ovid, Virgil, or perhaps the *Niebelungen*, and thunder round to me with "Paint dat!" I found him the most grotesque mixture of literature, art, scepticism, indelicacy, profanity, and kindness. He put me in mind of Archimago in Spencer.

But for all his eccentricity as a painter, Fuseli seems to have been a good teacher. For one thing, the students, inclined, like all students, to riot and irreverence, were heartily afraid of him. Haydon speaks of the awe with which he approached Fuseli after Hoare had obtained him an invitation to call, and of his father's pious ejaculation, "God speed you with the terrible Fuseli." But Haydon summoned up his courage, called, and was shown into Fuseli's painting room. "Galvanised devils—malicious witches

⁷He was succeeded as Professor of Painting by John Opie, R.A., who held the post from 1805-1807. Henry Tresham, R.A., was then Professor of Painting from 1807-1809. Fuseli served again in that capacity, as well as Keeper, from 1810-1825. He was a friend of William Blake and Mary Wollstonecraft.

brewing their incantations—Satan bridging Chaos, and springing upwards like a pyramid of fire—Lady Macbeth. . . . I expected the floor to give way—I fancied Fuseli himself to be a giant. I heard his footsteps and saw a bony little hand slide round the edge of the door, followed by a little white-headed lion-faced man in an old flannel dressing-gown tied round his waist with a piece of rope and upon his head the bottom of Mrs. Fuseli's work basket."

Although Fuseli's appearance was against him, his manner in the classroom was such as completely to overawe the students. He "stamped his foot," says G. W. Thornbury, "and raved of Michael Angelo; . . . he swore that half the students ought to have been tailors or bakers; . . . he railed at mere copies of nature—at landscapes, at portraits, and men who painted merely for money. He foams out his lectures, and describes to the frightened students how he used to lie on his back for weeks, looking up at the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel." The student whose description of the Visitors has previously been quoted, completes the picture of this strange man:

Boldness of outline and vigour of execution were sure to elicit his approbation. He loved a decision of style as he hated what he called "a neegeling tooch." Woe to the poor student who depended upon his elaborate finishing. After having been a week or ten days working up his drawing with the softest chalk, stumping, dotting, stippling, until he had nearly worn his eyes out, the Keeper would stealthily come behind him, and looking over his shoulder would grasp the porte-crayon, and, standing at arm's length from the drawing, would give it so terrific a score as to cut through the paper and leave a distinct outline on the board beneath; and then would say, by way of encouragement to future exertion, "There, Saar, there, you should have a boldness of handling and a greater fwreedom of tooch."

Aside from such summary corrections, however, Fuseli's method of teaching seemed to be pretty much a matter of letting the young student alone. As Leslie says in his *Autobiographical Recollections*: "Art may be *learnt* but can't be *taught*. Under Fuseli's wise neglect, Wilkie, Mulready, Etty, Landseer, and Haydon distinguished themselves." Fuseli was capable of inspiring students and of winning their respect. Many men of far greater native abilities have failed as teachers because of their inability to do this.

As to Fuseli's influence upon Haydon, opinions differ. Haydon himself largely disclaimed any debt: he granted that Fuseli inspired

him and urged him to persevere in his devotion to High Art (a doubtful service), but he insisted that from the first he detested Fuseli's "mannered style" and grotesque anatomy. Haydon's son, also, quotes from the painter's journal for 1805 to show that his father even then recognized the defects of his master's "frenzied extravagance of style"; but he admits that "it would have been no loss . . . if he had seen less of Fuseli at this critical period." A comparison between the characteristic faults of Haydon's and Fuseli's painting, however, shows some striking resemblances which may not be entirely coincidental. Thornbury, for example, thus describes Fuseli's work:

His brawny, gesticulating monsters of heroes wear tight Roman armour of solid plate-steel, through which, with childish affectation, he makes the muscles display themselves, as if the steel were silk. . . . Fuseli is always strained and blustering. . . . His rapiers are all two-handed swords, and his heroes are all drunken prize-fighters. . . . *Bottom* is a flayed Hercules, swollen with muscles; and the attendant, *Puck*, is a miniature Atlas, or a stumpy gladiator . . . he thinks exaggerated muscles make his work resemble Michael Angelo's; but fat is not strength, nor is wadding muscle.⁸

Now Haydon's tendency to anatomical distortion has been remarked by most of his critics: G. F. Watts, the artist, is one; and George Borrow, in *Lavengro*, makes it one of the chief points of his satire on Haydon. Fuseli, too, sometimes introduced portraits of his contemporaries into his historical and poetical pictures, a practice of some of the old masters which Haydon later adopted in his *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem*. It is even possible that Haydon's swearing, a transitory habit which seems to have developed about this time, may have been a result of Fuseli's example.

It is at least possible, then, that Fuseli's influence upon Haydon was not altogether good. He did encourage and inspire the young man, but Haydon was never greatly in need of either encouragement or inspiration. What he did need, particularly during those formative years, was guidance, intelligent discipline, and restraint, none of which Fuseli was qualified to give. Fuseli, in short, was himself a romanticist, and he urged Haydon even farther along the

⁸Allowing muscles to show through armour was a common affectation by historical painters of the period.

road which his art had already begun to travel. But Fuseli was a bad romanticist: he glorified uncontrolled emotionalism; he refused to subject his materials to the earnest and painstaking technical discipline which distinguishes great romantic art, the art of Wordsworth's sonnets and of Keats's odes, the art of Turner's and Constable's landscapes.

As has been related, Haydon, at nineteen, was entered in the Antique School of the Royal Academy in January 1805 and took his place as a probationer on the first night of Fuseli's keepership. Their former meeting was evidently remembered by the Keeper, for Haydon says that Fuseli, on that night, came up to him, pointed his finger at him, and said "in a voice of thunder, 'I know enough of you.' " But this must be taken as nothing more than a gesture of recognition, for the old man soon showed a marked interest in the development of his earnest pupil; the two, in fact, became extraordinarily intimate.

The next day Haydon made the acquaintance of John Jackson who had entered the school at the same time, and the two were soon close friends. Jackson, a man of 23, had already obtained the patronage of Lord Mulgrave and the friendship of Sir George Beaumont, whose influence had gained him admittance to the schools. Jackson later became a portrait painter and copyist of the first rank, his copies of Reynolds commanding higher prices than original portraits by Raeburn. Haydon describes him at this time as "a most amiable, sincere, unaffected creature . . . [with] a fine eye for colour. . . . To this dear friend I owe my first sound principles in colour." The intimacy between these two was shared to some extent by John Bryant Lane, of unfortunate career, an historical painter, "a pompous little fellow who was always saying 'God bless my soul.' He was patronized by Lord [de Dunstanville], looked down on me for not drawing with spirit—thought lightly of Jackson because he studied effect." Lane "had a good worthy heart, and all the affectations of talent without any of the reality." Haydon was greatly impressed by Lane's ideas, but Jackson soon set him right by assuring him that he drew "fifty times better" than his hero.

In March occurred the drawing for their tickets. Jackson, Lane, and Haydon were admitted on the 9th. The drawing was from the

Discobolos, and Haydon was proud when West, the President of the Royal Academy, praised his drawing in particular.

In all, thirty-two students were admitted in 1805, a marked contrast to the preceding three years during which a total of nine students had been accepted. Among the 1805 class was James Elmes, enrolled as a student of architecture, who was later to champion Haydon's causes in his *Annals of the Fine Arts*.

When the term closed in the same month, Haydon continued his studies in his own quarters, working twelve to fourteen hours a day, until a letter came saying that his father was dying. Haydon packed at once, and after a brief farewell to Fuseli, set out for Plymouth. On his arrival two days later, he found his father somewhat recovered. His mother welcomed him hysterically and pleaded with him not to return to London. His struggles recommenced; family pressure was again brought to bear. Haydon had nothing but his Academy ticket and some anatomical drawings to show for his year's absence. His uncle Copley, who had called on him in London, swore that the young man was mad. Haydon fought his battle alone, then announced his decision once more to his family. His father gave in, but warned his son that he could not support him for long.

Meanwhile, Haydon had been about his artistic affairs. On the day following his arrival in Plymouth he had secured specimens from the surgeon at the hospital, and during his stay he managed to complete the book of anatomical studies which he was later to use for the instruction of his school. In response to Fuseli's invitation to write, Haydon had sent him a letter of several pages. Fuseli's brief reply of June 1805 Haydon records with enjoyment, particularly the concluding sentence which, by implication, rebuked the young man for his "four sides of sentiment and profundity." Jackson also wrote, in a letter which is frequently quoted but has been "unfortunately lost," advising Haydon of a new arrival at the Academy schools:

"There is a raw, tall, pale, queer Scotchman come, an odd fellow, but there is something in him; he is called Wilkie. Hang the fellow," I thought: "I hope with his 'something' he is not going to be a historical painter."

Soon after, Haydon took leave of his family and returned to London.

Jackson and Lane, who greeted him on his return, were full of

reports of Wilkie's promise. A meeting of these two oddly dissimilar men who were to be such close friends soon followed. Wilkie, who became the most distinguished genre painter of his century, was a peculiar and original personality. His intimacy with Haydon is described at length in the *Autobiography*, in Haydon's lecture on "Wilkie," and in Allan Cunningham's three volume *Life of Sir David Wilkie*. At this time Wilkie was virtually unknown; and the three friends, Jackson, Wilkie, and Haydon, faced together a future which was to bring two of them fame and honor and fortune, the other failure and despair. They dined together at an ordinary eating place in Poland Street, "for thirteen pence a head," which price Wilkie said, "I am sure is as cheap as any person can have such a dinner in any part of Great Britain. Besides, we have the advantage of hearing all the languages of Europe talked with the greatest fluency, the place being mostly frequented by foreigners; indeed it is a very rare thing to see an Englishman; while there are Corsicans, Italians, French, Germans, *Welsh* and *Scotch*."⁹ Haydon says that they used to vary this at times by dining at a chop house at the back of Slaughter's Coffee House in St. Martin's Court, or at John O'Groat's in Rupert Street. About this time Haydon moved to the West End, taking lodgings at 3 Broad Street, Carnaby Market. Wilkie was living at 11 Norton Street, and Jackson at 32 Haymarket.

Meanwhile Haydon continued his anatomical studies by obtaining "nearly a whole subject" for himself "at a surgeon's in Hatton's Gardens." His enthusiasm for anatomy grew. Charles Bell, later Sir Charles Bell, the Scotch anatomist, came to town early in 1806, and Haydon and Wilkie proceeded to "beat up sixteen pupils at two guineas each" to attend a course of his lectures. This was followed sometime later by a second course, with which, Haydon says, he completed his studies.

Wilkie had passed from his rank of probationer to that of student in December 1805 and was soon after admitted to the Life School where Haydon, apparently, already was.

⁹Farington on March 16, 1807, recorded in his *Diary* that: "After dinner Lord Mulgrave . . . sd. that *Wilkie, Jackson, & Haydon*, now associate together constantly,—dine together somewhere for a shilling or eighteen pence & afterwards go to the Academy to study.—Wilkie & Jackson both appear to have a high opinion of the ability and judgment of Haydon."

One of the prerogatives of Academy students seems to have been attendance at the funerals of eminent artists, and on at least two occasions Haydon and Wilkie exercised their rights. When John Opie died in April 1807, and the cortege left his late house in Bernard Street for the interment in St. Paul's Cathedral, the twenty-seventh coach containing Wilkie and three other gentlemen was followed by the twenty-eighth in which rode Messrs. "Haydn" and Lane and two other mourners. Previously, late in February 1806, Haydon and Wilkie attended the solemn funeral of Barry, the historical painter, who had died on the 22nd and lay in state at the Adelphi, surrounded by his great works. This was the occasion which Haydon describes so delightfully when Wilkie borrowed a spare black coat from his friend. "Many and many a time have Wilkie and I laughed over the short sleeves and still shorter waist, and it was only the other day (May 1840), after a lapse of five-and-thirty years, that we remembered it again, and laughed our laugh as of old, though I fear *Sir David* did not relish the recollection so much as formerly."

Wilkie's first picture in the Royal Academy exhibition of 1806 was a sensational success. *The Village Politicians* had been painted for Lord Mansfield who seems to have behaved rather meanly toward Wilkie regarding its price. But the picture's success in the exhibition brightened the prospects for future commissions, and Jackson and Haydon rejoiced unaffectedly with their friend. Wilkie, who through Jackson's good offices had obtained the patronage of Lord Mulgrave, was in a transport. In September 1806 he visited his noble patron at Mulgrave Castle, and on the 9th of that month he wrote Haydon:

It will perhaps give you some pleasure to hear, that you are not infrequently the subject of conversation. It seems Mr. Jackson has spoken very highly of you, several times, to Lord Mulgrave, and I have told them of the picture you are at present engaged on, which has raised their curiosity and expectations: at the same time, Sir George [Beaumont] has expressed a desire to call upon you, when he returns to London, and Lord Mulgrave has desired me to transcribe a few lines from a subject which he seems to wish to have painted, as he admires it for its grandeur. He wishes also to know, if you think it would suit your ideas, although he would not wish to put any restraint upon your inclinations. The subject [the assassination of

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Dentatus] has seldom or never been painted, which his Lordship thinks an advantage to it.

Haydon, meantime, had been away from London on an affair of the heart. Wilkie's letter spurred his return. When he got home, he ordered the canvas, six feet by four, for his first picture, whose full title was to appear in the Academy catalog for 1807 as: "252. Joseph and Mary resting with our Saviour, after a day's journey on the road to Egypt." The romanticist must mark his high moments by ceremonial; and on October 1, 1806, "setting my palette and taking brush in hand, I knelt down and prayed God to bless my career, to grant me energy to create a new era in art, and to rouse the people and patrons to a just estimate of the moral value of historical painting. I poured forth my gratitude . . . I arose with . . . peculiar calm . . . and looking fearlessly at my unblemished canvas, in a species of spasmodic fury I dashed down my first touch. I stopped, and said: 'Now I have begun; never can that last moment be recalled.' "

Haydon's difficulties with this first picture were considerable, but at last he had progressed with it far enough that he could suffer a visit from Lord and Lady Beaumont, who had suggested to Wilkie their desire to meet Haydon. "They both eyed me well and were delighted with the picture. 'Well,' said Sir George, 'very poetical, and quite large enough for anything.' I bowed, but differed; explained that my object was Grand Art, and that this was my first attempt." After inviting the young painter to dine, Haydon's future patron left, apparently well pleased. Wilkie, dining with Haydon that same night, increased his joy by telling him that Lady Beaumont had admired his "antique head."¹⁰

Haydon's description of his first dinner in high life is an amusing passage in the *Autobiography*:

The awful day came, when a youth from the country, who had never in his life dined at any table higher than a country parson's, was to make his debut at a party in high life. "God only knows how I shall go into the room," thought I: "I will keep behind Wilkie; at any rate I am a match for him, and I will *not* drink Lady Beaumont's health in porter."

¹⁰In the *Autobiography* for 1808 Haydon notes that on two occasions he sat to Jackson for a portrait for Lord Mulgrave.

Wilkie called—I had been shaving until my chin was half skinned—washing until I was quite in a heat—and dressing and redressing until my back ached again—brushing my hair—looking behind me in the glass—putting the glass on the floor and then opening the door—bowing and talking to myself and wishing that my mother could see me! I was ready and away we drove, I in a cold perspiration. We reached the house, the door opened, and we marched through a line of servants who bawled out our names from the entrance. In went Wilkie and in went I, and in five minutes was much more at ease than I ever had been in my life, sitting on an ottoman talking to Lady Beaumont. Mr. Davy was announced, and a little slender youth came in, his hair combed over his forehead, speaking very dandily and drawingly. Dance, the architect, and several others followed, and after some little chatting in the gallery dinner was served. Davy took Lady Beaumont, the rest followed as they pleased, and I was placed within one of her Ladyship. The dinner went off well with me, for I felt quite at ease; everyone seemed so kind. At dessert Lady Beaumont, leaning forward, said: “When do you begin Lord Mulgrave’s picture, Mr. Haydon?” Immediately all eyes were fixed upon Mr. Haydon who was going to paint a picture for Lord Mulgrave. I was the new man of the night! “Who is he?” was asked. Nobody knew, and that was more delightful still. . . . We soon rose for coffee. I found her Ladyship anxious to discuss the subject of Lord Mulgrave’s picture, and as I imagined that it would be peculiarly interesting to detail how I meant to paint it, and found that I was really listened to, I became quite entertaining, whilst Wilkie, full of modesty, hung back and seemed frightened to tread within the circle. However, carriages were soon announced, and Wilkie and I took our leaves and walked home.

After this most encouraging reception by the world of fashion, Haydon redoubled his efforts. In order to make sure that his colors were correct, he used to mix them and carry samples on a piece of pasteboard to Lord Stafford’s gallery, to which, by Sir George’s kindness, he and Jackson and Wilkie were admitted; there he would compare them with the Titians on display. On February 28 and March 23, 1807, Sir George Beaumont wrote to Haydon encouraging him and offering helpful advice. After six months’ labor the picture was finished, in time for the Royal Academy exhibition. But should he submit this first picture? Jackson, Wilkie, and William Seguiet, another friend, urged him to do so; but Sir George advised against it, and when Wilkie learned of this, he shifted his view and agreed with his patron. The thought that Wilkie had been influenced by selfish motives was enough to decide

Haydon. His reaction to opposition was always the same: such a challenge a romanticist never refuses: he decided to exhibit.

The picture was sent in, and Haydon awaited anxiously the decision of the hanging committee. "For days I wandered about in hopeless misery; I could not eat or drink; I lost my relish for everything; I could not sleep; I could not paint; called on one friend after another affecting gaiety; bored Fuseli, who, being Keeper, saw what was daily doing by the Committee; until, at last, one morning, when after a timid knock I opened the door at the usual 'Come in,' Fuseli turned round with his lion head, the white hair glistening as the light quivered down upon it from the top of his high window, and roared out: 'Wale, is it you? for your comfort den, you are hung be Gode, and d—d well too, though not in chains yet.' 'Where, sir, for God's sake?' 'Ah! dat is a sacrate, but you are in the great room. Dey were all pleased. Northcote tried to hurt you, but dey would not listene; he said: 'Fye, zure I see Wilkie's hand dere.'" "Come, come," said Westall, "dat's too bad even for you!" "Wilkie's hand," replied I, 'good heavens, what malice! I would as soon let Wilkie feed me with a papspoon as touch a picture of mine. But what petty malignity!' 'Wale, wale,' said Fuseli, 'I told him (Northcote), "you are his townsman, hang him wale." When I came back whayre de deyvil do you tink he was hanging you? Be Gode, above de whole lengts and small figures about eight inches. "Why," said I, "you are sending him to heaven before his time. Take him down, take him down; dat is shameful!" ' ' "11

Thus, through Fuseli's influence, *Joseph and Mary* was finally well hung, "on the right side of the entrance door in the old Great Room at Somerset House, which for a first picture by a young student was a very good situation and obtained me great honour." But Wilkie's painting, *The Blind Fiddler*, painted for Sir George Beaumont, was the sensation of an exhibition which was reputedly "one of the finest and largest that the country had ever beheld"; and Haydon did not grudge him its popularity. Turner apparently did, for his *The Blacksmith Shop*, which was hung near Wilkie's painting, is said to have been painted more brightly during the varnishing days allowed the Academicians, in order to kill its rival.

¹¹I have a further note on this in *Notes & Queries*, Dec. 16, 1933.

When the Royal Academy schools had reopened in January 1807, Haydon was again in attendance. Among his fellow students, along with Jackson and Wilkie, were William Etty, William Collins, William Mulready, John Constable, and William Hilton, all of whom later achieved distinction of sorts and membership in the Academy. With Hilton and Etty, Haydon was then especially congenial; and although he later, with others, took a dim view of Hilton's merits as a painter, in the *Autobiography* he spoke feelingly in praise of his old fellow-student's generosity, amiability, and kind heart. Etty, according to his biographer, confessed himself indebted to Haydon's zeal, and as late as 1848 had "still a kind and grateful word for 'poor Haydon.'" Toward Collins, a subject painter, who, with Etty, obtained his ticket that year, Haydon maintained an affectionate feeling, recognizing, one perhaps unkindly suspects, no rivalry in that quarter. Collins, whose son, Wilkie Collins, the novelist, is perhaps better known, died only a few months after Haydon, and like his friend he is buried in St. Mary's churchyard, Paddington. John Constable, easily the most distinguished of the students then in attendance, was more friendly with Jackson and Wilkie than with Haydon. For Mulready, Haydon later expressed considerable respect, but they were never especially intimate. Another student, a Scotchman, William Allan, whom Haydon mentions as a friend of this period, does not seem to have been in attendance at the schools in 1807. Allan, like his fellow countryman Wilkie, became a Royal Academician and was later knighted.

Meanwhile Haydon had been improving his social position by dining frequently, in company and alone, with Lord Mulgrave, who encouraged his ambitions for historical painting and talked intimately with him of Nelson and Napoleon and British politics, topics of which Haydon never wearied. Lord Mulgrave, first lord of the Admiralty, was in a position to have authoritative information. Of course Haydon, tactless then as always, could not refrain from argument and contradiction—not on political matters, for in these the Tory nobleman and the painter were in pretty general agreement, but, of all things, on poetry. On the occasion of his first dining with Lord Mulgrave, Haydon disagreed with him on the subject of

Milton, whom Haydon defended; but as the nobleman closed the argument by producing a hearty laugh, the incident passed over without unpleasant consequences.

One other event marked the close of 1807, an affair which, Haydon says, may have "first sowed the seeds of enmity against me in the minds of many of the Academicians." The Academy students, who admired Fuseli almost as greatly as they feared him, decided unanimously to present their master with a silver vase. The group who had first proposed the idea constituted themselves a committee, but the body of the students resented this as unconstitutional and un-English. Elmes describes the proceedings: "Every evening after the drawing from the plaister was over, the doors were locked, and the plaister room of the Academy became a complete hall for debates. Long speeches were made on the impropriety, injustice and indecorum of such an assumption on the part of the self-appointed committee, and after a sort of general rebellion, the committee was dissolved; and it was resolved, upon Haydon's proposition, that the whole body of students should meet and elect a committee by vote. This was done, Wilkie was made president, and Haydon treasurer. Flaxman [R. A., the eminent sculptor] became a subscriber, and presented a design for the vase."

Flaxman's design was accepted, and fifty guineas was raised to pay for the gift. Haydon's description of the further proceedings is amusing enough:

The committee was composed of a great many students, and while regulating the business we met at each other's rooms, had oysters for supper, sang songs, laughed and joked, and found the thing so very pleasant that we all agreed in hoping that it would not be a rapid performance on the part of Rundell and Bridges. Wilkie at that time was a capital fellow: he had a little kit on which he played Scotch airs with a gusto that a Scotchman only is capable of.

We got so fond of these committees that Fuseli grew fidgetty and at last roared out: "Be Gode ye are like de Spaniards; all ceremony and noting done!" I reported the Keeper was getting sore, so we agreed to settle at the next committee what the inscription should be. At the next committee the oysters predominated a little, so we deferred the ultimate consideration to another meeting. . . .

We soon settled the inscription; the vase came home, and the day approached upon which it was to be presented. . . .

The day came; the night before I rehearsed to myself the speech—action and expression. I imagined I was in Fuseli's presence. I took up a Latin dictionary for the cup and concluded the speech exactly as I placed the supposed cup upon the table before Fuseli. I fancied the speech was good, but the question was how did I look—how ought I to look? The glass only could decide, and so, taking the half-rubbed, broken-down looking-glass of a lodging-house second-floor bedroom, with only one pivot-pin left, and that excessively loose, I planted it so as to see myself, with a candle over my head; repeated my speech; acted; finished; glimpsed at my features, and felt satisfied that there was no grimace. When I do anything I never consult my friends, and never did from a boy. My speech was concise and to the point, and so all the advice about "Don't make it too long," and "let us see," and "what are you going to say?" was lost upon me. "If I fail," said I, with vast importance, and conscious of the awful responsibility I had undertaken, "the disgrace is mine. If I succeed, yours will be the credit, for the sagacity of your choice."

The committee met in Fuseli's middle chamber and then repaired to his gallery with me at their head. Fuseli came out, bowed, and looked agitated. The vase was on the table in front: I advanced to the table and said, "Mr. Fuseli—sir," in such a tremendously loud and decided tone that they all started, but I quickly modulated my voice, and as I concluded I placed the vase before him. Fuseli made a very neat reply, and Flaxman a long speech which bored every one. We then all retired to a cold collation, drank Fuseli's health with three times three, and separated, the committee privately inquiring of each other whether all the business was concluded, or rather, if no possible affair could be invented for another committee supper. Flaxman said, as we came down to lunch, "The students hit upon the right man in young Haydon," and afterwards complimented me on my able speech.

Fuseli, of course, was gratified, but the Academicians were angry about the whole affair, and according to Elmes, "very shortly after a law was passed, prohibiting any Academicians expressing approbation in regard to the conduct of officers of the Academy."

Haydon in later years looked back on these student days in London as the happiest he had ever spent. The somewhat Bohemian group to which he belonged is pleasantly pictured in the *Autobiography*. "My tea was so good and my cups so large," he says, "that they always used to say, 'We'll have tea at Haydon's in the grand style.'" It is, perhaps, hardly fair to add here the description of Haydon during these years which an anonymous writer in *Fraser's Magazine* gave many years later in his review of Haydon's

The Reform Banquet. By that time Haydon had made many enemies; and *Fraser's* was less than enthusiastic about reformers, their banquets, or painters of their banquets. But here is the description for what it is worth:

When he was a young man . . . he aped Raphael; not in his features, but in his dress: he fancied he had a picturesque head, and did himself out in curls and a collar, leaving a bit of white neck visible through the crevices of a dirty shirt.¹²

Encouraged by the favorable reception of *Joseph and Mary*, Haydon resolved to begin the heroic picture which had been commissioned by Lord Mulgrave, the full title of which was to be, as given in the Academy catalog for 1809, "259. The celebrated old Roman Tribune, Dentatus, making his last desperate effort against his own soldiers, who attacked and murdered him in a narrow pass.—*Vide Hooke's Roman History.*" But before he was able to start work on it, an urgent letter recalled him to Plymouth. His father had been stricken again. This time he travelled by sea, and after a stormy voyage, arrived home. He found his father out of danger, and he resolved to extend his visit for the purpose of trying his hand at portraiture, which he practiced on his friends at fifteen guineas a head. His portraits, he says, were "execrable . . . I sincerely trust that not many survive." But he managed to accumulate a fair sum of money which aided him upon his return to London.

His father recovered slowly, but his mother, who had been failing for some time, became alarmingly ill. At her request, Haydon and his sister set out with her for London, in order to seek more expert medical aid, but the lady died at Salt Hill, before they could reach the city. Haydon's grief was very deep. He relates the incident fully, perhaps too fully for the taste of some readers, in the *Autobiography*. The concluding passage will suffice here: "During the dinner [after the funeral at Ide on November 30, where she had been buried in the family tomb near her father] I stole from the

¹²"At the time when the Prince Regent (to hide a defect produced by disease) and his fashionable imitators . . . enveloped their throats with cravats of enormous size and voluminous folds, bolstered high around their necks and surmounted by stiff stuck-up collars, it became almost a party-badge and a sign of ultra liberalism with Hunt, Byron, Shelley, Keats, and their admirers to wear soft turn-down collars—easy, graceful, commodious."—Mary Cowden-Clarke, "Leigh Hunt."

mourners and, bribing the sexton, descended into the vault, and stretching myself upon the coffin for the last time lay long and late, musing on every action of her hard devoted life: on my knees, by her side, I prayed God for His blessings on all my actions, and rose prepared for the battle of life! With a last lingering look I left the vault and returned to our broken home. The next night I left for London to begin my picture, pursued by the influence of my mother whose memory I have cherished and shall cherish for ever."

Haydon undoubtedly suffered deeply, but one cannot help suspecting that he was not entirely unaware of the romantic effectiveness of the picture he made, stretched out on his mother's coffin, "musing."

The Glory That Was Greece

HAYDON'S MOTHER died in November 1807. By the first of January the young artist was back in London, hard at work on his new picture. Soon after his return, on the advice of Fuseli, he changed his quarters, taking a first floor at 41 Great Marlborough Street, Regent Street. There his difficulties with *Dentatus* began. Fuseli, he found, could not help him: from him he got "nothing but generalizations without basis to generalize on. He could not explain . . . a single principle." Haydon's portrait painting at Plymouth had given him greater technical facility, but there were more serious problems. The figure of *Dentatus* should, he felt, be heroic, not in dimensions—for the picture was to be only of cabinet size—but in proportions: "How was I to build a heroic figure, like life, yet above life?" If he copied nature, his work would be "mean"; if he disregarded nature, it would be mannered like Fuseli's. Such models of the antique as he had seen did not help him much: there was not enough of nature in them. The problem seemed without solution.

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and the Dutch masters of genre. Haydon was often irritated by his friend's caution and slow speech, but he knew that Wilkie's talent was genuine. The two, says Cunningham, Wilkie's biographer, "maintained a sort of friendship which resembled an armed neutrality." They were always arguing, but always seeking each other's advice. Wilkie's journal reveals the reliance which the Scotchman placed upon his friend's counsel. Farington in his diary for April 1, 1808 recorded Constable's remonstrance to Wilkie "that 'if He continued . . . He would at last come to paint from Haydon's mind rather than from his own.'—Constable sd. Haydon . . . has a decided manner of giving His opinion & with authority."

In October the two friends, fired by their enthusiasm for the lectures of Charles Bell and eager, like all young romantics, for a cause, set about campaigning for Bell's election to the post of Professor of Anatomy at the Royal Academy. But they were unable to secure the support of the influential Academicians Robert Smirke and Sir William Beechey, and they abandoned the project with regret. The voting on December 3 resulted in the election of Anthony Carlisle, J. M. W. Turner's physician, who retained the Professorship of Anatomy for sixteen years. Carlisle received twenty-four votes, Bell only four. The new professor was not well thought of by Haydon and his friends. The *Examiner* lampooned him vigorously during the next several years; and Wilkie in his journal for November 20, 1809 wrote: "Went to the Academy, and heard a lecture by Carlisle on anatomy, which struck me as a very inefficient one indeed: he concluded by illustrating part of his subject with a drawing, which being in invisible ink excited great applause."

In both Haydon's and Wilkie's journals for this period there are many entries which throw light upon their relationship. On October 15, 1808 Wilkie "went to Bell with whom I found Haydon, to tell him of our unsuccessful endeavours: wished to go to the Academy, but Haydon, who was seized by an idle fit, refused to go, but pulled me away to Drury Lane, to enjoy The Honey Moon." Haydon's version of a similar incident was: "In the evening I felt idly inclined, and communicated my wish to go to the play, Wilkie (who felt equally lazy, only was cunning enough to wait for my proposal)

immediately agreed." On March 3, 1809 Wilkie dined with Mr. Angerstein and there heard Fuseli praise Haydon's *Dentatus* to the eminent men, including West, Rogers, and Lawrence, who were present. "On this, some of the company began to talk of Haydon's picture of the Holy Family, and to comment on the character of Joseph, and the miraculous conception, in a manner scarcely orthodox." Two days later Haydon called on Wilkie and was highly gratified to learn that he had been talked about.

The friendly relations between the two, although continued with a few interruptions throughout their lives, never quite recaptured the genuineness and ease of this early period. Wilkie's election in November 1809 to an Associateship in the Royal Academy was probably the first serious rift. Before his election, Haydon said, "Wilkie was as great a radical in the politics of art as Wordsworth in the politics of States"; but Wilkie, like Wordsworth, outlived his youthful follies, and became a model of conservatism and orthodoxy. There was, however, no definite break between the two until 1812, when Haydon delivered his first published attack on the Academy. Then Wilkie, a full-fledged Academician, drew back from his indiscreet friend, although Haydon had excepted him in his criticism. But during these early years their friendship was intact. In October 1808 they visited Sam Strowager, the porter and male model of the Academy, and had tea with him. On November 2 they went to the Opera House to see the Covent Garden Company play *Henry VIII* and were pleased with the Wolsey of John Kemble and the Catherine of Mrs. Siddons. On November 6 Haydon had breakfast at Wilkie's, and afterwards they went to church together and heard a sermon by Sydney Smith. On the 10th Haydon helped Wilkie find new lodgings at 84 Great Portland Street, and on the 12th "Haydon came to breakfast." On the 20th Haydon called to look at Wilkie's picture, *The Sick Lady*, and approved of the changes which had been made. On December 17 "Haydon approved of some of the alterations which I proposed in *The Cut Finger*, and approved of the sketch which I had made for the group of portraits, and told me that I ought not on any account to alter my original arrangement of the boy's dress." The following day the two friends had breakfast with Seguier and Prout, then went

to church where Sydney Smith preached, for both were admirers of Smith's wit and eloquence—although they shared doubts as to his orthodoxy—and frequently took their friends to hear him preach. In his journal Haydon described Smith as “the most playful, impudent, careless cassock I ever met.”

Meanwhile Haydon's difficulties with *Dentatus* continued. Wilkie and Fuseli were insufficient guides; nature and the antique had so far provided inadequate models. But knowing that he must get on somehow, Haydon kept to his painting and finally got in the figure of his hero. It did not please him. Then one day Wilkie called. He had obtained an order to admit him to the exhibition of antique marbles lately brought back from Greece by Lord Elgin. Haydon agreed to go along, and the two set off for Park Lane where the marbles had been stored in a temporary building attached to Lord Elgin's house near Hyde Park Corner. The marbles were at that time little known, and it is to Haydon's lasting credit that he at once recognized their sublimity. In the *Autobiography* he describes his first view of the Elgin Marbles, an experience which was to affect his entire life:

The first thing I fixed my eyes on was the wrist of a figure in one of the female groups, in which were visible, though in feminine form, the radius and ulna. I was astonished, for I had never seen them hinted at in any female wrist in the antique. I darted my eye to the elbow, and saw the outer condyle visible affecting the shape as in nature. . . . That combination of nature and idea which I had felt was so much wanting for high art was here displayed to midday conviction. My heart beat! . . . I turned to the Theseus and saw that every form was altered by action or repose . . . in the figure of the fighting metope I saw the muscle shown under the arm-pit in that instantaneous action of darting out, and left out in the other arm-pits because not wanted. . . . I saw, in fact, the most heroic style of art combined with all the essential detail of actual life. . . .

The story of the Elgin Marbles and of their acquisition by the British government can be briefly told. Thomas Bruce, seventh Earl of Elgin, while English envoy extraordinary at the Ottoman Porte, had been dismayed when he observed the rapid deterioration of ancient Greek buildings and their wanton destruction by the stupid and savage Turkish soldiery. By the payment of extortionate “fees” he finally obtained permission to remove a large part of the best

THE GLORY THAT WAS GREECE

of the marbles; and in 1801-1802, after a year of toil, the figures were prepared for shipment. Accidents, however, and the war with France delayed his sending them to England, and it was not until 1812 that the final consignment arrived in London. The Elgin collection, now in the British Museum, consists chiefly of the principal figures from the pediment and metopes of the Parthenon, with some fifty-six slabs from the frieze. There are numerous other fragments and inscriptions from the Erechtheum and the temple of Athene Nike.

Opinion in England regarding the marbles was somewhat undecided. The question of their value, both monetary and artistic, will be treated in a later chapter. The matter of Lord Elgin's motives and the ethics of his removing the marbles to England may be mentioned here. It seems quite apparent that Lord Elgin was altogether sincere and honest in his wish to assure the preservation of the marbles. There is ample evidence that, under the anarchic conditions prevailing in Greece, the figures were being rapidly destroyed. Turkish soldiers used them for target practice; Greek peasants were quarrying stones from the ancient temples to use in the construction of their homes. Immediate action of some sort was imperative if the marbles were to be saved. It is apparent, too, that Lord Elgin undertook his labors at his own expense with no assurance that he would ever be reimbursed.

On the other hand, there were those who felt that Lord Elgin was merely using his official position and his wealth as means of ravaging the prostrate Greeks. English sympathy for Greece ran high, in those days of her struggle for independence, and to some, the salvaging of the marbles seemed rather their pillaging. Perhaps the most vocal of the critics was Byron, who, in his youthful *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (1809), satirized Lord Elgin vigorously:

Let Aberdeen and Elgin still pursue
The shade of fame through regions of vertu;
Waste useless thousands on their Phidian freaks,
Misshapen monuments and maim'd antiques;
And make their grand saloons a general mart
For all the mutilated blocks of art:

Later, of course, Byron's attitude toward the marbles changed. No longer did he speak of them as "Phidian freaks," for like most English men of taste he came to recognize their excellent beauty. Toward Lord Elgin, however, his scorn turned to hatred and disgust. In both the second canto of *Childe Harold* (1812) and *The Curse of Minerva* (1811) he attacked the Scotch lord bitterly as one who would "rive what Goth, and Turk, and Time hath spared"; and with Byronic fire he reviled Elgin as a jackal and a dweller in a bastard land. Byron also did not scruple to fling Lord Elgin's unfortunate matrimonial affairs in his face with the lines:

Some retribution still might Pallas claim,
When Venus half avenged Minerva's shame.

This question, like so many of the questions of the past, has long since ceased to matter. It may be interesting to note, however, that there has been in recent years a considerable sentiment in favor of the restoration of the marbles of the Elgin collection to Greece, once political conditions there become relatively stable and secure.

Wilkie, whose genius inclined, perhaps, more toward the ridiculous than toward the sublime, was little affected by his visit to Lord Elgin's collection, and the aroused Haydon had to seek a fellow worshipper elsewhere. Fuseli soon took fire at his description, and master and pupil set off for Park Lane together:

. . . first a coal-cart with eight horses stopped us as it struggled up one of the lanes of the Strand; then a flock of sheep blocked us up; Fuseli, in a fury of haste and rage, burst into the middle of them, and they got between his little legs and jostled him so much that I screamed with laughter in spite of my excitement. He swore all along the Strand like a little fury. At last we came to Park Lane. Never shall I forget his uncompromising enthusiasm. He strode about saying, "De Greeks were godes. . . ." We went back to his house, where I dined with him, and we passed the evening in looking over Quintilian and Pliny. . . . Had Fuseli always acted about the marbles as honestly as he did then, it would have been well for his reputation; but . . . He did not behave with the same grandeur of soul that West did.

Haydon also spoke his admiration to Lord Mulgrave, and at the nobleman's request Lord Elgin allowed the young painter to draw

from the marbles.¹ For three months he drew steadily, working often, he says, far into the night. His enthusiasm, his energy were tremendous. Occasionally he would take a day off to study Greek or to read immoderately: Boswell's *Johnson*, Virgil, or Homer. On other days he would paint, until at last, "Utterly disgusted at my wretched attempt at the heroic in the form and action of my *Dentatus*, I dashed out the abominable mass and breathed as if relieved of a nuisance."²

The last months of 1808 were crowded with activity. The drawing at Lord Elgin's, the study and reading continued. *Dentatus* was being reconstructed after the new principles. Jackson, who lived a few doors from Haydon at 54 Great Marlborough Street, was painting Haydon's portrait for Lord Mulgrave, and the painter sat to him frequently. Sometimes Haydon dined out, with Lord Mulgrave and his distinguished friends at the Admiralty, where he met Canning for the first time, or at Sir George Beaumont's where, earlier in the year, he heard Coleridge abuse Dr. Johnson as having "verbiage" and little more.

The close of the year saw Haydon's picture still unfinished; but by March 1809 the last touches had been given it, and *Dentatus* was carried to the Academy exhibition. The painting was, Haydon felt,

¹ Lord Mulgrave's letter to Lord Elgin, May 21, 1808, throws light on his reaction to Haydon's determination to carry "the perfect forms and system of the antique . . . into painting, united with the fleshly look of every-day life."

"The Request which I made to Mr. Hamilton was not one on which I rest the least importance, it was made at the request of a young Artist of great Talent, who is painting an historical Picture for me, and who thought he could add grace and dignity to his work by selecting a figure or two from your fine Grecian Sculpture. But I was not, even in making the application convinced that he would improve his picture by such an attempt to mix Grecian Statuary with the living models that he found in London but if my opinion were different, I should not deem any benefit his picture could derive, equivalent to the inconvenience to you of establishing a precedent of copying from anything in your collection."

² Elmes makes much the same statement, and Frederic Haydon repeats his father's words. But one "J.S.A." who claimed to have been on intimate terms with Haydon at the time, wrote to the editor of *The Illustrated London News* (July 18, 1846): "The only part of the picture which he erased and repainted was the neck of *Dentatus*; and that was in consequence of a defect in drawing. . . . Instead of being indebted to any new principle of the art, from seeing the Elgin Marbles, he was, at this time, much taken up with the study of the colouring of Bassano, of whose works he was a devoted admirer."

a complete success: in it he had accomplished just what he had set out to do. "The production of this picture," he wrote some thirty years later, "must and will be considered as an epoch in English Art. The drawing in it was correct and elevated, and the perfect forms and system of the antique were carried into painting, uniting with the fleshy look of everyday life. . . . It has, however, appeared to me since that the expression of contempt in *Dentatus* is overdone and borders on caricature, though his action is good." Leigh Hunt was pleased with the picture and called it "a bit of old embodied lightning." He accompanied the painter when he carried it to Somerset House, and tortured Haydon by saying, "Wouldn't it be a delicious thing now for a lamplighter to come round the corner and put the two ends of his ladder right into *Dentatus's* eye? or suppose we meet a couple of drayhorses playing tricks with a barrel of beer, knocking your men down and trampling your poor *Dentatus* to a mummy!" Haydon was indubitably nervous: he "tripped up a corner man and as near as possible sent *Dentatus* into the gutter. However, it reached the Academy safely."

Haydon's acquaintance with the Hunts had come through Wilkie's introduction, on what date does not appear. It was probably in the latter part of 1808, during the progress of *Dentatus*. On January 3 of that year had appeared the first number of *The Examiner: A Sunday Paper on Politics, Domestic Economy and Theatricals*, edited by Leigh Hunt and published by his elder brother John Hunt. Haydon's connection with the paper did not really commence until late in 1809 with the appearance of his first letter, a defense of Lord Elgin, over a signature which was to become notorious, "An English Student." But Robert Hunt, an older brother of John and Leigh, who wrote most of the "Fine Arts" criticisms, had already displayed his liberal and anti-Academical leanings by heckling the Academy for its failure to elect Charles Bell. In 1809, in his review of the Academy exhibition, he praised *Dentatus* highly: "The colouring of the picture is the only part I conceive, with deference to the superior judgment of Mr. Haydon, exceptionable." In the same review he took occasion to give Wilkie a few words of fatherly counsel, warning "this judicious painter how he descends too low into objects of disgust."

On February 11, 1810 "R.H." continued his criticism of the Academy, this time for its illiberality. John Soane (knighted in 1831), the Professor of Architecture, had in one of his lectures found some fault with the restored Covent Garden Theater, "an excellent but by no means perfect work of Mr. Smirke, jun. an Associate of the Academy." This criticism was not well received and led to the suspension of Soane's lectures and to a resolution which later became an Academy law, "that no comments or criticisms on the opinions or productions of living artists in this country shall be introduced into any of the Lectures delivered at the Royal Academy," a law which, of course, laid the Academy open to further satire. One other article by Robert Hunt may be noticed here. On July 22 appeared his "Suggestions on the Best Mode of Encouraging History Painting in England." This article, which Edmund Blunden says was "doubtless urged by Haydon," advocated the formation of a National Gallery, government patronage of historical painting, the remodeling of the Royal Academy, and the establishment of a Professorship of Historical Painting in the Academy schools, all, except the last, favorite projects of Haydon's in later years. By 1811, in fact, Haydon had already begun his unceasing efforts to accelerate an English renaissance by addressing memoranda to the Directors of the British Institution in favor of a National Gallery, and to Mr. Percival, the prime minister, asking government encouragement and support of historical painting and the establishment of schools of design.

After *Dentatus* had been safely delivered, Haydon had a premonitory dream. "I dreamed the other night," he wrote his father on April 1, "that the exhibition was opened, and I ran immediately, of course, to discover whether my picture was hung well or not. To my utter astonishment I could not find it in any part of the Academy! In a great rage I went to Fuseli and told him how infamously I had been used. He then came out with me, and after a long search found my poor picture covered over with a tablecloth under the kitchen table. Just as I was beginning to stamp with rage, I awoke!" The dream very nearly came true. Fuseli had been favorably impressed and the painting was hung where *Joseph and Mary* had been. But almost immediately, during Fuseli's absence, it was taken

down and hung in the ante-room. Haydon was distraught. For the first time the idea seems to have dawned upon him that the Academicians were conspiring to destroy him. Lord Mulgrave and Sir George Beaumont supported him loyally. Fuseli called his painting, Elmes says, "the best picture ever painted by an Englishman." But the other Academicians were cold: "with the exception of Fuseli and West, there was probably no Academician able to comprehend its principles. At the examination of the picture before it was hung up, one of the hangmen [Phillips] said he had heard a great deal of the picture, but saw nothing in it." Farington, who had not had time to look at it, was content to agree with the artists he knew who had, in thinking "it Had been overrated"—and they, in turn, agreed with him "in thinking it injudicious to say too much in praise of anything."

Charles Robert Leslie, who defends the Academy in all its relations with Haydon, says that the hanging of *Dentatus* was favorable and just. Wilkie, however, also a loyal Academician, told William Bewick in 1824 that Haydon had been "ill-used—badly treated in the matter, but he should never have heeded,—passed it by, and got in. He might then have pursued a deep scheme of retaliation. . . . But you see, Mr. Bewick, I am myself of the Academy, and it is a rule that 'birds are not to foul in their own nests,' so, if you please, we will change the subject." One cannot hope now to determine the rights of this long forgotten dispute. Enough that most of Haydon's partisans seem to have felt him badly mistreated. To the earnest and self-assured Haydon the matter admitted of no doubt.

It is apparent that up to this time Haydon, like most ambitious young artists, had looked forward to ultimate election to the Academy. He attended the Academy schools; he sent his pictures to its exhibitions; he looked on the Academy as the home of the greatest modern English painters, Reynolds and Gainsborough, West and Fuseli. The Academy, he realized, was deficient in historical painters; and he seems earnestly to have believed that he had only to prove his abilities in "High Art" to be welcomed to membership. But five years in London had opened his eyes. The Academy had shown itself illiberal in more ways than one. It was afraid of internal criticism. It was riddled with politics. Its hanging commit-

tees were an open scandal.³

Haydon's belief that he had been unfairly treated was natural enough under the circumstances. The thought seems to have preyed on his mind. Lord Mulgrave behaved well. He praised the picture and paid the artist, according to the *Autobiography*, first 160 guineas and later 50 guineas more. Farington, with his usual readiness to believe Constable's gossip, wrote in his diary for April 20, 1809:

Lord Mulgrave, within a few days has paid *Haydon* 150 guineas for His picture . . . now in the Exhibition. Haydon desired to leave the price to His Lordship. He (Haydon) communicated the payment to *Jackson* & desired Him to report that 200 guineas was the sum paid for the picture.

But there is no good reason for doubting Haydon's statement. Sir George Beaumont also continued kind, too kind perhaps, for there may be some justice in Constable's remark to Farington, two years later, that the indiscriminate praises of Mulgrave and Beaumont "certainly made Haydon self opinionated & presumptuous."

Somewhat concerned over Haydon's state of mind, Lord Mulgrave then proposed that the young artist and his friend take a trip into the country. He obtained them passage to Plymouth on a cutter, and on June 22 they set out for Portsmouth to embark. Haydon's description of the voyage is full of zest; Wilkie, evidently a poor sailor, enjoyed himself less.

For five weeks the two friends sojourned in Devonshire. They visited most of the places of interest near Plymouth—Underwood, Plympton, and Cheddar, with its "tremendous rocks and cavern"—and dined with Sir William Elford at Beckham. Much of their holiday was spent at Haydon's home. They bathed often at Two-Coves, where Haydon had swum as a boy. Wilkie was not a swimmer, and Haydon endeavored to teach him by stretching him out, full length, on the beach or, at home, on a table to practice the strokes.

One day a visitor came, Cyrus Redding, a friend of the Haydons, and the three young men planned a swimming party at the Barbican the following forenoon. Haydon and Redding, who were good swim-

³In 1811 the committee, composed of Turner, Callcott, Rossi, Fuseli, and Howard was publicly criticized for breaking the Academy rule which allowed members to exhibit no more than eight works. That year Turner hung nine, and Callcott ten, "all of which," complained the critic, "are placed in the very best positions."

mers, took a boat and, going well out into the Sound, dived overboard. "I could swim as well as he," wrote Redding years afterward, "but he beat me all hollow diving." Haydon gloried in the sense of power which deep water swimming gives; it thrilled him, he said, "to have fathoms of deep water under him." When they returned to shore, Wilkie was stretched out on the sand, faithfully practicing his strokes.

They took many walks into the country around Plymouth, and Redding and Haydon, at least, felt the beauty of the Devonshire scene. Wilkie appeared to them almost apathetic, and Haydon's plan of walking home after a ball at Ridgway in order to see the sunrise found him unwilling and afraid for his lungs. Redding and Haydon, however, walked the five miles home; and when the sun rose, the painter greeted it with a fine burst of "rhodomontade."

Wilkie showed more interest on their return trip to London, which carried them through Exeter and Bath. They visited Wells Cathedral and Glastonbury Abbey ruins on the way. On one of the stages of their journey Haydon helped pass the time by extracting from a "robust, fine weatherbeaten fellow" the story of his experiences as a sailor on the *Victory* at Trafalgar.

They arrived in London on August 3, and after ten days in the city they set out for Coleorton Hall, the home of Sir George Beaumont, "a fine Mansion, near Ashby de la Zouch, in Leicestershire, built in the ancient English or Gothic style of architecture." There Sir George had assembled a notable collection of paintings, and over a period of thirty years he entertained many famous artists and literary men. This visit, so pleasantly related in the *Autobiography* and in Wilkie's journal, was an enlivening and heartening experience. The time was spent in reading, rambling, and sketching. They "dined with the Claude and Rembrandt" before them, "breakfasted with the Rubens landscape, and did nothing, morning, noon, or night but think of painting, talk of painting, dream of painting, and wake to paint again." In the evenings Sir George would read for them, from Shakespeare, Beaumont (whose birthplace was near at hand) and Fletcher, Addison, or Wordsworth. At dinner one day he said to them: "Wordsworth may perhaps walk in; if he do, I caution you both against his terrific democratic notions." After a

fortnight the visit came to an end, and on August 27 the two friends left Coleorton Hall for London.

On their return to the city both young men entered their names as candidates for the associateships in the Royal Academy which were to be filled at the November election.⁴ Wilkie, who had obtained the support of such influential Academicians as Sir William Beechey, Phillips, and Farington, was assured of success. The last mentioned, Joseph Farington, whose *Diary* contains such a wealth of mingled rubbish and gold, was a powerful influence in the Academy.⁵ An inferior artist, he soon gave himself largely to the politics of art and became the unofficial "Dictator of the Royal Academy." He seems never to have quarreled with Haydon, but it is apparent from the *Autobiography* and from Farington's *Diary* that the two men had little respect for each other. Haydon had, moreover, quarreled with Constable, a close friend of Farington's, and on April 9, 1809 had sent him a letter "accusing him of having said to Northcote That He, Haydon, had been warned by Him (Constable) not to ridicule the *ladder* by which *He had ascended*, meaning Jackson.—The letter concluded, "That He was *mad* at having allowed Constable to have wound himself into his acquaintance." Constable showed this letter to Farington, and it may well have caused the older man to throw his influence against Haydon's candidacy. It is possible, too, that Sir George Beaumont's advocacy of Haydon had done him no good with the Academy. Sir George, as an amateur, was not a member; and Leslie records that, while "a sincere friend of the arts," Beaumont was, "in many things a mistaken one. He . . . ridiculed Turner . . . [and] did the same with respect to Stothard." And both these men had influence in the ranks of the Academy. In any event, Wilkie was successful on the first balloting by a vote of 20 to 14 over George Dawe, the portrait painter. In the second contest Dawe was elected, "for painting a white satin gown," according to a sneer in the *Annals of the Fine Arts*. Haydon did not receive a single vote.

Haydon's manners and bearing at that time were probably in-

⁴I cannot be certain that Haydon entered his name this year. On the basis of somewhat conflicting evidence, however, it seems likely that he did. He also entered his name as a candidate in 1810 and 1811 but received not a single vote.

⁵Born 1747; R.A. 1785; died 1821.

strumental in bringing about his defeat. Like many men of small stature, he was always highly assertive and self-assured. His success with his early paintings, his acceptance in society had made him bold to the point of arrogance. "Haydon," wrote Farington in his diary for April 3, 1809, "is now Sir George's *Hero*, who is with him every day. Wilkie is on the decline in favor." Beaumont told Farington that "except West there is no other who cd. paint such a picture as that He had done for Ld. Mulgrave"; in fact, wherever he went, Beaumont was "full of encomium of the extraordinary abilities of Haydon in painting."

Never modest about his abilities, it is not surprising that Haydon at 23 allowed such praise to go to his head. His failure to receive election to the Academy embittered rather than chastened him. The Academicians, he apparently felt, were jealous of him and fearful of his powers. In a short time even Beaumont was forced to admit that Haydon's manners were objectionable, especially toward the younger artists, and "ought to be regulated." Lord Mulgrave was also unfavorably impressed.

Constable had already experienced Haydon's egotism. "He is posessed [*sic*]," he told Farington, "with a notion that the eyes of all the world are upon Himself." That was in April 1808. The following day Constable had his impression confirmed when Haydon asked him why he was so much concerned over his landscapes. "Think, sd. He, what I am doing,' meaning how much greater the object & the effort."

Haydon's swelling egotism soon led him into another of the needless and embittering quarrels which were to cloud the remainder of his life. This dispute was with Sir George Beaumont, who had befriended him liberally. The painter had often dined with him, and through Beaumont's good offices had broadened his acquaintance with those whose patronage was most likely to prove valuable. It is probable, too, that Sir George is responsible for Haydon's meeting Wordsworth and Coleridge. Beaumont had helped Haydon by offering him unusual social opportunities, guidance and friendly advice, and a commission. It was over this last that the quarrel arose.

Some time earlier, while Haydon was still at work on *Dentatus*, Beaumont commissioned him to paint a subject of his own choice.

Haydon suggested Macbeth, the moment before the murder of Duncan, and his patron agreed. After some discussion, the size of life was decided upon and Haydon commenced his work. In January 1809, on a trip to London, Sir George discovered that Haydon was making the figures "of a size which he particularly disliked,—something less than the life, & looking like a race of little men"—"dwarfish, approaching too near the natural height of men witht. being it." Haydon pleaded the example of Titian, but Beaumont was not satisfied: Haydon was, after all, not living up to the terms of his agreement.

Friends urged the painter to follow Sir George's wishes; Lord Mulgrave interceded. But to Haydon the affair had begun to take on the proportions of a gigantic struggle between right and wrong. Sir George returned to Dunmow and a correspondence ensued. On his return to London, more letters were exchanged until Haydon's became so frenzied and ill-controlled that, Farington says, Beaumont was concerned for his sanity. Finally, Haydon began to show the letters to his friends. He tried also to appeal to Lord Mulgrave to support him against Sir George, but the nobleman's sympathies were, naturally enough, in the other direction.

Finally Sir George brought the correspondence to an end, after Haydon had written a particularly disagreeable letter, a letter so obnoxious that Beaumont did not intend to reply to it; "but the temper of it was such that He became alarmed from an apprehension that if he did not notice it Haydon might commit some desperate act upon Himself." He therefore wrote a short letter, telling Haydon that he would no longer correspond with him, but wishing him success. There the matter rested for some years.

The merits in this controversy are fairly clear. Sir George Beaumont seems to have acted honorably; but Haydon, by some obscure process, was able to persuade himself that he was in the right, and thus he could act out his indignant martyrdom accordingly. In his own words: "I was fearless, young, proud of a quarrel with a man of rank which would help to bring me into notice. This was foolish in the extreme, but it was natural. Full of high and virtuous principles, knowing I had all along meant to do what was right, I felt disgusted at injustice, and seized the first opportunity of showing

that the artist was the man to be listened to and not the connoisseur." The admirer of Haydon may well shake his head over this passage from the *Autobiography*. Without going so far as the critic in *Fraser's* who later described this as an example of Haydon's "deliberate calculation and vulpine cunning, under a mask of high temper and self-assertion," one may discern here a trace at least of moral obliquity.

Haydon learned, too late, how foolish he had been, that "victory is defeat in such cases, and the artist will always find it so." Thus to be "filled with the glory of resistance to injustice" no doubt satisfied his desire to strike a romantic attitude in the world's view; but it was a dangerous and futile gesture for a young painter, dependent upon the favor of his patrons, to make.

Early in 1810 the directors of the British Institution offered a 100 guinea prize for the best historical painting in their exhibition. Not entirely discouraged by the comparative failure of *Dentatus* at the Academy the previous year, Haydon considered entering it in the competition, and at Lord Mulgrave's suggestion the picture was sent. It was hung in a favorable position beside another competing picture by Howard who had been a member of the Academy's hanging committee which had placed *Dentatus* in the anteroom. The Academy, Haydon claimed, made every effort to influence the judges against him, but on May 17, 1810 his name was announced as the winner. The 100 guineas was very welcome, as Haydon's finances were in a bad way, but the gratification of beating the Academy's champion was even greater.

About the same time Haydon sent a cabinet picture, *Romeo leaving Juliet at the Break of Day*, to the Academy. He also sent a study of the lioness which, at Charles Bell's invitation, he had dissected earlier in the year. These two works the hanging committee placed in the ante- or Octagon-room, and Haydon, "as much diverted as angered," went to Somerset House, took down his pictures, and carried them home with him in a hackney coach. The *Romeo and Juliet* was exhibited the following year at the British Gallery and was favorably received, at least by the *Examiner* critic, Robert Hunt, who, after objecting to "the coarse character and disproportionate size" of Romeo's mouth, praised the picture highly. The

flesh, he said, "is naturally and beautifully tinted.—The piece is worthy of adorning the best collection." It later sold, in 1814, for £52, 10s. Haydon, meanwhile, had been continuing his anatomical studies by attempting to mould the entire body of Wilson, the Negro, who was also moulded by Chantry, Westmacott, and Lawrence. His description of this in the *Autobiography* is extremely spirited and altogether reminiscent of Cellini's casting of the *Perseus*. The Negro, it may be said, was very nearly killed in the process, but in a day or two recovered.

By this time, Haydon had taken his first pupil. Charles Locke Eastlake, who later became President of the Royal Academy, had come to London about 1808 at the age of fifteen. He entered the Academy schools, but at the same time attached himself to Haydon, his fellow townsman, and followed his researches and experiments in anatomy and painting with some of the ardor of a disciple. Haydon was apparently at this time not accepting fees for his tutoring; but there were compensations. Over fifty years later, Richard Redgrave, the artist, wrote in his diary:

April 12th. [1861]—To-day, at dinner, the President told us some stories of Haydon. It seems that Eastlake, as a young student, was recommended to the care of his countryman when he came up from Devonshire to study at the Royal Academy. We were talking of theatrical recollections, and Eastlake said he remembered the "O.P."⁶ riots, and was present on the first night when they broke out. Haydon had said, "My boy, we will go to the theatre." And to the theatre accordingly they went; to the boxes, of course, for Haydon loved everything of the best. When they came to the door, Haydon said, "You'll pay for me, my boy, and we'll settle it when we settle the other little matters." When they got into the box, they found the place in an uproar, and both of them entered fully into the spirit of it. On coming away, Haydon said, "My boy, we must see this out. This is glorious!" So they went the next night, when there was the same demand, "Now my boy, you'll pay." And thirteen nights did this continue, "much to my horror," said Eastlake, "as I was but a student with a very limited allowance, and this made a great hole in it. It was a strange way of taking care of me, and, after all, the 'O. P.' tired us out." "Did you ever get paid?" "Oh no! Paid? No! but I got advice which was worth much to me. Soon after this, he said to me, 'Well, my boy, we'll go to Hampton Court.' And so we went, and

⁶The "O.P. [or Old Price] riots" were those which occurred at Covent Garden Theatre between September and December 1809. The occasion for the disturbance was the increase in the admission fee on the reopening of the theater.

this was added to the other little matters for future settlement. Another day he came to ask me to join him in a visit to the Tower. He had borrowed some armour [for his *Dentatus*], and was about to return it. So it was put into a hackney coach, and we started with it. Of course I paid the coach, and as we paced through the armoury, he said, 'I may have to borrow again, we must be liberal to the servants, have you any half crowns?' These were also placed with the little account between us, which never got paid."

During the quarrel with his patron, Haydon had neglected his painting; but now, reassured by his studies and dissections, he returned with vigor to *Macbeth*. The Elgin Marbles had been removed to Burlington House, and he resumed his sketching there. The drawings which Haydon had made while the marbles were in Park Lane are now in the British Museum. Lord Elgin was so favorably impressed by them that he offered Haydon the post as curator of his museum. Now, as before, much of Haydon's drawing was done at night; after "bribing" the porter to let him in, he would sketch the mighty fragments and muse romantically upon departed greatness.

In July, Haydon began to think about renewing his application for an associateship in the Academy. He called upon Farington to inquire about his eligibility as he had not exhibited in the current year, but Farington assured him that he might put his name down. "He much wished me to express what my opinion was as to the strength of His claim," wrote Farington in his diary, "but I declined saying anything respecting it." In the election of November 5, Haydon received not a single vote. George Arnald, a landscape painter of scanty genius but considerable tact (Lawrence's term was "fawning insincerity"), was elected.

Haydon's financial difficulties were, for the first time, becoming acute. His father had written him some time before warning him that his support must soon be withdrawn. The bookseller had maintained his son for six years at an expense of £200 a year, but during 1810 his remittances had become more and more irregular. Now, he said, his son would have to shift for himself. But as the painter considered his prospects, they must have seemed bright enough. *Dentatus* had brought a good price and had won him an additional 100 guineas at the British Gallery. Why should not *Macbeth* win the 300 guineas now offered by the same institution? Surely he

could not give up just as his career was getting under way. At first, he says, he was bitter about his father and his Uncle Cobley; but he soon thought better of them and resolved that he would continue, living simply and economically. So, "after praying God for His help and support," he returned to his work. He wrote to his father his thanks and regrets and set about raising immediate funds for his daily expenses.

And here began debt and obligation, out of which I never have been, and never shall be, extricated, as long as I live.

. . . There was a friend who came forward nobly to the extent of his power. He was a humble man, though connected with one who has made noise enough—John Hunt, the brother of Leigh, as noble a specimen of a human being as ever I met in my life: of him I borrowed £30. This carried me on with my mouldings and castings of the Negro. Peter Cleghorn, a friend of Wilkie's and mine, lent me £30 more. I called my landlord, explained to him my situation, and asked him to wait till *Macbeth* was done. He said: "You paid me when your father supported you, and I see no reason not to believe you will do so when you can support yourself."

January 1811 found him still painting at *Macbeth* and drawing from the Elgin Marbles. For six months he kept at his work, with only occasional lapses into his most hated vice, idleness. But even idle spells were sometimes productive, for during them he indulged in orgies of reading.

A great reader, he delighted especially in the grand and the heroic. His acceptance of Foster's theories "On Decision of Character" has already been remarked. And the Man of Decision, it will be remembered, exercises his creative imagination most fully "While animated by some magnanimous sentiments which he has heard or read, or while musing on some great example. . . . The splendid representation always centres in himself as the hero. . . ." He was extraordinarily sensitive to what he read and was often affected to tears or to anger. He was proud of this quality in himself and, as Foster had recommended, cultivated it: it helped him "tune" his mind to great subjects. "Except by *Clarissa Harlowe*," he wrote, "I was never so moved by a work of genius as by *Othello*. I read seventeen hours a day at *Clarissa*, and held the book so long up leaning on my elbows in an armchair, that I stopped the circula-

tion and could not move."

As a boy he had delighted in the lives of ambitious men. This hero worship he never outgrew. In 1813, for example, he was reading Southey's *Life of Nelson* which had just appeared, "every syllable, with interest and delight." He had a tendency, almost megalomaniacal, which appears occasionally in his writings, to compare himself with his heroes and to identify himself with their greatness: with Shakespeare and Homer, with Nelson, Napoleon, and Wellington, and with Hogarth, Raphael, and Michelangelo.

In September 1810, after the birth of Thornton Leigh Hunt, Haydon had written:

My dear Hunt,

I congratulate you with all my soul on the safety of an amiable wife, and the birth of a son. It is a grand thing to have occasioned the existence of a thinking being, one, who *may* be famous in this world, and immortal in the next. I feel my heart expand at the fancy.

Most affectionately yours
My dear Hunt
B. R. Haydon.

And during 1811 the intimacy between the two men was strengthened. On June 6 Haydon entered in his journal: "Walked to Primrose Hill with Hunt. Read Alfieri's *Memoirs*. Idle, idle!" On the 28th he breakfasted with Hunt, and in the evening they dined with Wilkie and spent a pleasant evening together at his rooms in Manor Terrace, Chelsea. This relationship with Hunt led Haydon into what he calls his "first public controversy." His dissection of the lioness and his moulding of Wilson had convinced him that, from the standpoint of physical construction, the Negro was the link between the animal and the man. He had discussed his ideas with Hunt and had interested him in the question. The arrival in London of Captain Cuffee, a Negro shipmaster, gave Hunt his opportunity, and in the *Examiner* for August 4 appeared his article on "Negro Civilization," which, without mentioning the painter, disagreed rather thoroughly with the ideas he had expressed. Haydon resolved to reply, and "after writing, rewriting, puzzling and thinking, blotting and erasing, reading to Eastlake and taking his advice," he managed to complete his first letter. On September 1 it appeared

over the signature "An English Student." In the next number of the *Examiner* the cudgels, pro and con, were taken up by correspondents who signed themselves "Niger," and "A Friend to Human Improvement," and, of course, by the editor himself. On the 22nd appeared a second letter from "An English Student" with further comments on the subject by "Plainway" and "A Friend to Human Improvement." Hunt attempted to "take advantage of the valedictory symptoms of his Correspondent, by closing the present dispute, which has become a mere matter of repetition. The compliments of his Correspondent he takes in good part; and what is intended for mortification, is willing to attribute to the feelings of the moment." But the English Student insisted on one last word, which appeared on the 29th. One other letter from Haydon was published that year, on the Elgin Marbles; but his first controversy was over, with the honors pretty well his. Wilkie, who had been following the dispute from his home in Cults, wrote his friend on October 7, congratulating him on his success, but advising against further argumentative writing. Haydon, however, seems to have been enormously well pleased with himself. Against the redoubtable Leigh Hunt he had at least held his own. Success in this minor skirmish had the unfortunate effect of spurring him to hope for more vigorous conflict, conflict which would allow him to give full scope to the latent power of his pen.

The close of 1811 was marred by yet another needless personal quarrel. On November 9 John Bryant Lane told Farington "that Fuseli last night informed Him that in consequence of an abusive paragraph having appeared in the *Examiner*, He had signified to *Haydon* His desire that He (Haydon) should no longer call upon Him, as to Haydon He attributed this paragraph, 'Only 3 persons had seen my picture,' sd. Fuseli, 'when the paragraph abusing it appeared, and Haydon was one of them. The other two persons have assured me that they never spoke of my picture, it remains with Haydon alone.'" It seems altogether possible that Haydon, who was at this time the *Examiner's* favorite artist, had told Robert Hunt about Fuseli's painting, and that Hunt had rushed his ideas into print. But Fuseli's ill feeling towards Haydon may have been of even earlier date. The *Examiner* had already advised Fuseli to

study the "propriety" of Haydon's "hues; forms and expressions of passion" as exemplified in *Dentatus*; and few teachers enjoy being advised to model themselves after their pupils. Haydon left the Academy schools about this time, certainly before the beginning of 1812.⁷

By the last day of 1811, *Macbeth* was finished, and Haydon entered in his journal a summary of the year:

When I review the past year, I can certainly dwell upon it with more pleasure than on any year since I commenced study. My habits of application have been energetic . . . God grant me this power at the end of the next year . . . [my body is] still uninjured by application . . . [my] mind invigorated and refreshed for greater undertakings, [and I am] more experienced in all points, and a degree, I hope, nearer to that idea of perfection which I have formed for myself.

God in heaven, on my knees I pray it may be my lot to realize my ideas of Art before I die, and I will yield my soul into Thy hands with rapture. Amen, with all my soul.

Haydon might have added, but characteristically did not, that he was already heavily in debt, that he had quarreled with one of his two most liberal and influential patrons and was estranged from the other, and that the Royal Academy, the most powerful body of artists in the world, had closed its doors firmly in his face.

⁷As attendance records for this period no longer exist, it is not possible to determine the exact time of Haydon's separation. It was then possible for students to attend the schools for ten years.

CHAPTER

• FOUR •

Into the Arena

~~~~~ 1812-1815 ~~~~~

**E**ARLY IN 1812, *Macbeth* being finished, Haydon wrote Sir George Beaumont for permission to send the painting to the British Gallery in competition for the generous premiums of 300, 200, and 100 guineas which the directors were offering. Beaumont replied, disclaiming any responsibility, as he had not yet seen and approved the completed picture. Haydon sent it to the Gallery, where it was prominently displayed. Lord Mulgrave, seeing it next to a Veronese, was favorably impressed and advised Sir George to go and see it. Beaumont did so, and while refusing to accept the picture, offered the painter a gift of £100 for his efforts. As an alternative, he suggested a commission to paint him a picture of more suitable size. Haydon rejected both offers. *Macbeth* remained for some time at the British Gallery, awaiting the decision of the directors. The exhibition that year inspired one observer to poetic criticism, "in the style of Anstey's Bath Guide," and Haydon's picture and its critics were not overlooked.

Now struck by Macbeth, a cold chill seized my blood,  
As he steals to the bed of King Duncan the good.  
So pallid his looks, and so true their expression;  
Sure the artist has witness'd some murd'rer's transgression;  
Has watch'd by the pillow where age had repose,  
And overpower'd toil, had sunk down in its cloaths.  
Yet I heard a crabb'd gentleman say with a sneer,  
If the merits were striking, the faults too were clear.  
And observed that, "Macbeth with two daggers to handle,  
In this chamber of death, had much need of a candle."  
But in this he was wrong, I will venture to say,  
Since all eyes may see that the light is broad day.

Haydon did not at once begin his new picture, *The Judgment of Solomon*, plans for which were already in his mind. He felt that he had been unjustly treated by Sir George. That rankled. But his anger at the Royal Academy had stirred him more deeply, and he resolved upon a frontal attack. Of course, his position at the time made such an offensive particularly unwise. Beaumont's refusal to accept *Macbeth* had left Haydon at least £600 in debt. Later he admitted his rashness, but at the time he saw no reason for withholding the attack which he had so long been planning. Leigh Hunt urged him to proceed, but Wilkie, with shrewd common sense, warned him against it. "Hunt," said he, "gets his living by such things: you will lose all chance of it." "But no," Haydon later explained, "I was unmanageable. The idea of being a Luther or John Knox in Art got the better of my reason." Moreover, he was confident of winning the prize at the British Institution with his *Macbeth*. Lord Mulgrave apparently urged him on, much as one might encourage a bulldog for the pleasure of seeing the fur fly. Soane, still smarting from the Academy's treatment of his lectures, agreed to support Haydon with a pamphlet. And Haydon himself, always pugnacious and quixotic, was, of course, eager for battle.

In the *Examiner* for January 26, 1812 appeared the first installment of a long letter from "An English Student" addressed "To the Critic of Barry's Works in the Edinburgh Review, August 1810." This letter was in three parts, appearing on successive Sundays. The first dealt very harshly with Mr. Richard Payne Knight, the "Critic" referred to, a wealthy and influential connoisseur and collector, whose judgment and taste Haydon attacked and ridiculed.<sup>1</sup> Knight, a well-meaning and liberal patron, had aroused Haydon's anger by his failure to appreciate the Elgin Marbles and by his unfavorable remarks on Barry, the historical painter. The *Examiner* exposure was thorough and convincing—but foolhardy. Payne Knight was a man of reputation and influence. As one of the directors of the British Institution he was in a position to do Haydon a

<sup>1</sup>Farington in his diary recorded a glaring instance of Payne Knight's inability to distinguish between the genuine and the spurious. "Mr. Knight [confronted with the evidence] acknowledged His mistake and said it was owing to having seen it through wrong spectacles." Knight's liberality is shown in his having commissioned William Westall to paint *The Grecian Marriage*, a picture six feet wide, for 1000 guineas.

great deal of future injury. The two succeeding letters were slashing attacks upon the Royal Academy. Radicalism, criticism of established powers, was not in the best form during the early nineteenth century. The reaction against the French Revolution was still at the flood, and artists particularly, who were dependent upon patronage, were well advised to be discreet. Wilkie's *Distraint for Rent*, for example, although in 1815 the directors of the Institution unanimously voted him 600 guineas for it, was considered too critical of the economic rights of the aristocracy and was carefully put away in the cellar of the British Institution out of the common view.

The theses which Haydon nailed on the door of the Royal Academy are familiar to any reader of the *Autobiography*. Since Sir Joshua's time, he felt, the Academy had steadily deteriorated. Mediocrity had become enthroned. The higher levels of Art were definitely discouraged: the Academicians were portrait painters and would countenance nothing else. The Academy had failed, moreover, in its duty of educating its own students and the people. The annual exhibition had become "a mere market for saleable goods—a splendid effusion of red curtains, where each academician tries to outglare his neighbor by red-lead and king's-yellow. . . . When the people have their heads so split by glare, by pageantry, by show, is it any wonder that they are so wanting in feeling for true art?" "Mediocrity, he said, ruled the Academy in the choice of its members and in the selection of paintings for exhibition. "The Forty" had become little more than a clique. Thus read Haydon's indictment, and with it he expounded his own ideas regarding art and art education.

The letters were widely read. The Academy, Haydon says, was in a "hubbub of fury and rage." "By Gode," said Fuseli, "the fellow is mad or punishable." And when one recalls the frequency at this time of Government prosecutions for libel, Haydon's rashness becomes more apparent. The Academy was, after all, an institution under Royal patronage and charter.

The day following the appearance of the second letter, Wilkie wrote his friend protesting at the tone of the attack and warning him that many of his suggestions and criticisms might be inter-

puted as arising from pique or from self interest. Wilkie was displeased, also, that Haydon had so pointedly made him an exception to all that he complained of in the Academy. This would, he felt, put him in a false light and do his prospects no good. Later he had to ask Haydon as "a particular favour" not to insist on having from him a ticket for the private view at the Academy as it might do him serious injury. To some extent at least, Haydon must have appreciated Wilkie's position, for he wrote the *Examiner* in a letter published two weeks later that Wilkie "never agreed with me in the motives I always attributed to the Royal Academy." But at the time Wilkie's caution appeared to Haydon very much like treachery; it was not until many years later that he would admit his friend's good common sense.

With the attack concluded by his letter of February 9, the "English Student" found himself a scapegoat. In addition to Leigh Hunt and Lord Mulgrave, three men are said to have urged Haydon to write: Chantry, the sculptor, William Collins, the painter, and Soane, the architect, all had some grudge against the Academy and offered to support him. But his letters created such a stir that they lost courage.<sup>2</sup> Soane suppressed his pamphlet and resumed his lectures at the Academy the same year, although his quarrel with the Council was not concluded until early in 1813. By 1814 Collins had made his peace and was elected an Associate; and in 1816 Chantry was also admitted. "Thus," Haydon concludes, "for the rest of my anxious life my destiny was altered. I had brought forty men and all their high connections on my back at twenty-six years old, and there was nothing left but 'Victory or Westminster Abbey.' I made up my mind for the conflict and ordered at once a larger canvas for another work."

On April 4, he began this new picture, *The Judgment of Solomon*, on a canvas twelve feet ten inches by ten feet ten inches high—"a grand size." The work proceeded rapidly through April, with only occasional idle days spent at the London Institution searching for information on the manners of the Jews; at a private showing of

<sup>2</sup>I have adopted here F. W. Haydon's version of the affair as it appears in his "Memoir" of his father. Elmes and Haydon himself mention Soane's pamphlet and its suppression.

Wilkie's pictures; at the British Gallery, where he was unfavorably impressed by West's *Christ Healing the Sick* (for which the artist received 3000 guineas); or at the exhibition of the Raphael Cartoons at Hampton Court.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile *Macbeth* was hanging at the British Gallery awaiting judgment. On January 10 Farington had written in his diary: "Haydon is now much elated with His prospect [of winning the premium], & speaks of the Royal Academy very slightly, saying as they had lost the opportunity when they might have elected him, it might now [be necessary] for them to send a Deputation to solicit Him to be of the Society." In the *Examiner* for February 16, Robert Hunt reviewed the British Institution Exhibition, commenting particularly upon the merits of *Macbeth* and the abilities of its painter. "In fine," he concluded, "the powers of this Artist are a high ornament and honour to the British Institution and the Nation." Hunt's praise was generous; but it is doubtful whether the *Examiner* puff, in the long run, did Haydon's chances any good. Long before the directors met to decide upon the winners, the *Examiner* and its editor had damned themselves in the eyes of respectable Englishmen; for on March 22 appeared Leigh Hunt's attack upon the Prince Regent. This was embodied in a leading article entitled "Princely Qualities" which described the future George IV as a "corpulent man of fifty" and, among other things, "a violator of his word, a libertine over head and ears in disgrace, a despiser of domestic ties, the companion of gamblers and demireps." Hunt also rebuked the Prince for his failure to patronize English art, a deficiency in the Royal Taste which had no doubt been pointed out to him by Haydon. A libel suit was inevitable, and this time the charges were made to stick. Leigh Hunt, and his brother John, as publisher, spent two years in gaol.<sup>4</sup>

Early in June the blow fell: the premiums offered by the directors of the British Institution were abruptly withdrawn. No ade-

<sup>3</sup>Haydon's admiration for the cartoons resulted later in a number of explanatory letters and articles about them which appeared over his name in the *Examiner* and the *Annals of the Fine Arts*.

<sup>4</sup>The Hunts had been sued three times before this, each time unsuccessfully. The legal costs of the defense had, however, been considerable and constituted, to all intents, punishment. Consult the early chapters of Edmund Blunden's *Leigh Hunt*.

quate explanation of the action was offered. Haydon and his partisans, of course, felt that the blow was directed at him. And it is at least conceivable that the attack upon Payne Knight, one of the directors, and the puffs Haydon had received in the *Examiner* may have influenced the action. In any event, the premiums were diverted to the purchase of *Christ Giving Sight to the Blind*, a "large, feebly painted picture" in oil by Henry James Richter, the watercolorist. Richter had not entered the competition, but the directors combined the 300 guineas they had offered with the 200 guineas donated as a prize by the contestants in order to make up the 500 guineas which Richter asked for his picture. The 100 guineas remaining was, Haydon says, voted "to a bad picture of a poor painter," the *Procession to Mount Calvary* by George Francis Joseph. The other candidates were each offered 30 guineas as a compensation for the expense of their frames.<sup>5</sup> Thus Haydon was left with *Macbeth* on his hands, its value severely depreciated by its failure at the Gallery. *The Judgment of Solomon*, another picture of gigantic size, was well under way, with every prospect of being as unsaleable as its predecessor. And daily his debts were increasing.

Of course, there were consolations, and Haydon, ever a man to strip out a silver lining and pawn it for ready cash, was quick to perceive them. The Academicians, willing enough to criticize a rival institution, protested loudly at the mistreatment of Haydon and the other competing artists. Charles Bell wrote Haydon a most kind, sympathetic, and encouraging letter, in which, however, he warned Haydon against holding a grudge. Haydon accepted the sympathy and encouragement but not the warning. The *Examiner* advanced gladly to Haydon's defense. On two successive Sundays Leigh Hunt attacked the British Institution for its breach of faith and praised Haydon's picture. The directors, he said, acted as they did because of Haydon's exposure of Payne Knight. Hunt's praise

. <sup>5</sup> Constable's account of the affair to Farington differed somewhat in detail. The directors, he said, had decided not to give the first or second premiums but to give 100 guineas to Joseph for his picture and to Haydon for his *Macbeth* and the other candidates 30 guineas each as compensation for the frames. "Haydon's astonishment at this decision was extreme." (Farington's spelling and capitalization throughout his diary are unconventional.)



of *Macbeth* was tempered with judicious reservations:

The picture [he wrote], has it's faults, as every body must allow; there is an excess about it,—an exuberance that wants pruning,—both in feeling and execution; the lower part of *Macbeth* is on too colossal a scale, and it's muscles too much obtruded; the head and limbs of the page with his face shewn, belong to different persons and ages, particularly the hand, which even allowing for the effects of sleep, is too much swollen and coarse, a hand for a pickaxe rather than for a train or a feathered bonnet . . . but on the other hand, when we consider the youth of the artist and the industry as well as ardour with which he must have studied, the beauties of the picture not only overbalance their faults beyond measure, but demand our surprise and admiration:—all the upper part of *Macbeth* is powerfully expressive . . . *Duncan* . . . is exactly the *Duncan* of the Poet.

Haydon found himself for the first time in really serious straits. It was becoming more and more difficult to borrow money. He approached Wilkie. “‘Will you advance me £10 in addition to the £24 I owe you?’ He shook, got nervous, was oppressed by my presence, looked cold, heartless, distant and fearful I would stay long.” And he refused to lend Haydon any more money.<sup>6</sup>

The painter already owed his landlord £200. How could he maintain himself during the painting of *Solomon*? He questioned whether he should or could go on. But his sense of duty, his romantic conviction of his calling, and the strengthening approval of the voice within reassured him. “How could I submit who had told the students that failure should stimulate and not depress? Contemptible! . . . Something instantly circulated through me like an essence of fire, and striding with wider steps I determined to bear all—not to yield one particle of my designs. . . . ‘Well done,’ said the god within, and instantly I was invincible.”

But he was to live through other bad moments. He had been dining at John O’Groats’s and, strangely enough, he had paid regularly for his meals. The day came when he had no cash, and he went to the dining room intending to eat that day without paying. “I thought the servants did not offer me the same attention. I thought I perceived the company examine me—I thought the meat

<sup>6</sup>Haydon’s description of this incident to Bewick was rather more vividly phrased. He told his pupil that the amount he asked for was £5 and made no mention of any previous loan remaining unpaid.

was worse. My heart sank as I said falteringly: 'I will pay you tomorrow.' The girl smiled and seemed interested. As I was escaping with a sort of lurking horror, she said: 'Mr. Haydon, Mr. Haydon, my master wishes to see you.' 'My God,' thought I, 'it is to tell me he can't trust.' In I walked like a culprit. 'Sir, I beg your pardon, but I see by the papers you have been ill-used; I hope you won't be angry—I mean no offence; but—you won't be offended—I just wish to say, as you have dined here many years and always paid, if it would be a convenience during your present work, to dine here till it is done—you know—so that you may not be obliged to spend your money here, when you may want it,—I was going to say you need be under no apprehension—hem! for a dinner.' "

Heartened by his success in this unexpected quarter, Haydon boldly approached his landlord. For two years, he warned him, he would not have a shilling in rent. The worthy man, impressed by the rubbing in of the new picture, agreed to Haydon's terms, thus becoming the first in a series of perhaps the most philanthropic landlords in all history. Haydon rejoiced; then knelt down and offered prayer. He arose, refreshed and buoyant. "These are the men that honour human nature," he later exclaimed, "and these form the bulk of the middle classes. Glorious Old England! While such hearts exist never shall foreign hoof trample down the flowers of our native land!"

But poverty proved a constant harassment. John and Leigh Hunt continued generous, but Wilkie's coldness had wounded him severely. His health grew steadily worse until finally a vacation became necessary, and with the assistance of John Hunt, Haydon went to visit a maternal uncle who had a living in Cheddar, Somersetshire. There his sister came to keep him company. He spent the time riding and idling and studying Italian. Like most men of romantic temperament, Haydon gloried in the sea, and it delighted him that from where he stayed he could hear it "beating on the wild shore with angry surf." His health soon improved, and with regret he parted from his sister and returned to London.

He found himself glad to be back. The day following his arrival he was hard at work. "I sprang like a giant refreshed to my canvas . . . mounted a chair on an old table, singing as independ-

ently as a lark, and was soon lost in all the elevated sensations of an ambitious and glorious soul." Financially, he managed to limp along. The Hunts were unfailingly generous and helped him what little they could, but the fashionable world had entirely deserted him. On November 25, Hunt offered him an opportunity to be of service. "Mrs. Hunt," he wrote, "is going to her modeling again, and wishes for a good original bust, not so large as life, in order that she may be able to work at it easily and on the table of an evening." Did Haydon know where she could borrow one with "a good poetical head of hair?" Hunt also spoke of the preparations for his legal ordeal. "I hope 'Solomon' goes on well (what a transition!)," he continued, "but pray don't forget your 'Mercury' as an occasional refreshment. It is an exquisite little conception, and dipped in poetry."<sup>7</sup>

In November, Lord Mulgrave, who, Haydon says, had given him no financial aid during this period, sent him a ticket to go to see the Prince Regent open Parliament for the first time. Haydon went and was greatly impressed by Lord Wellesley's speech, enough, he said, "to create a soul under the ribs of death." It was on this occasion that he conceived his idea of a series of historical paintings to adorn the sides of the house, a scheme which he later spent a great deal of time and energy in promoting. In December he made a final appeal to his father for aid; but the bookseller had already spent more on his son than he could afford, and Haydon could get no help from him.

In January, Haydon resumed for a time his drawing at Lord Elgin's, and while thus engaged he contracted a severe cold. As the year wore on, his health did not improve, and by December he was definitely ill. The irregularity of his eating and sleeping habits and the poverty against which he contended were no doubt the cause. "Nothing could equal my happiness in painting," he wrote later. "Oh, I have suffered much, there can be no doubt, but I have enjoyed more, and . . . my enjoyments are so intense that they amply compensate me."

<sup>7</sup> *Mercury in the disguise of a Clown, playing Argus asleep, in order to release Io from the shape of a cow, a cabinet picture, 35 by 41 inches, exhibited at the British Gallery in 1831 and at the Egyptian Hall in 1832.*

That year Haydon's father died. The painter, of course, felt his loss, but the two had been out of sympathy for so long that the blow was not a severe one. With the death of John Copley in 1815, the publishing and bookselling business which had been in the family for two generations disappeared, nobody knows where. Haydon seems to have realized nothing from it. And meanwhile his debts to his landlord, his boarding house keeper, and his friends were piling up day after day. William Hilton who had sold his *Mary Anointing the Feet of Jesus* to the British Gallery for 500 guineas, offered him "a large sum," but Haydon accepted "only thirty-four pounds." John Hunt, Charles Bell, and Joseph Strutt of Derby also helped him generously and often. But Haydon never had any clear conception of how to live within his means, and he spent what he borrowed as rapidly as he received it.

It was about this time that Haydon began to widen his acquaintance among literary men. The Hunts were now his intimates; and Leigh Hunt, always pleasantly gregarious, added Haydon to the circle of men of congenial tastes who had begun to gather around him. On January 29, Haydon "spent the evening with Hunt at Westend; walked out and in furiously after dinner, which did me great good." "Hunt's society," he added in his journal, "is always delightful: I do not know a purer, a more virtuous character, or a more witty, funny, or enlivening man." They talked of Hunt's approaching imprisonment, and Hunt had the grace to crack a small joke about it, something about being "in the midst of his friends."

On February 3, 1813, the Hunts were sentenced to separate prisons for two years. Each had also to pay a fine of £500, with the necessity of posting an additional £500 at the end of their terms as security for their good behavior during the five years following. It was a crushing blow, but the Hunts bore it bravely. Soon their prisons became the rallying places for their friends and for all the friends of liberty. Haydon tried to visit Leigh Hunt at Surrey Gaol in Horsemonger Lane soon after his imprisonment, but was at first refused admittance. He wrote Hunt on February 12, expressing his disappointment and sympathy and concluding with one of his less successful attempts at poetic expression:

I see you, as it were, in a misty vision . . . I think I perceive your massy  
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prison . . . As I advance with whispering steps I imagine . . . I hear oozing on the evening wind, as it sweeps along with moaning stillness, the strains of your captive flute; I then stop and listen with gasping agitation . . . afraid to stir, lest I might lose one melancholy tone, or interrupt . . . one sweet and soothing undulation.

Later attempts to see Hunt were more successful, and Haydon speaks also of frequent breakfasts with John Hunt and of many evenings spent with this "poor noble-hearted friend."

Haydon's acquaintance with William Hazlitt had begun the year previous at Northcote's studio in Argyle Place, just around the corner from Haydon's rooms in Great Marlborough Street. Hazlitt's friendship for old "Aquafortis" dated from the first few years of the century when Hazlitt himself was a struggling artist; it continued until the publication of his indiscreet *Conversations of James Northcote* in 1826 and 1827. Hazlitt's friendship was difficult to achieve and still more difficult to maintain. There was a solitary and black moodiness about the man, a sensitiveness to criticism, and a brutal tactlessness which made him a trying friend. The first meeting at Northcote's was pleasant enough, Hazlitt having expressed his admiration of *Macbeth*. "I asked him to walk up," wrote Haydon in his *Autobiography*. "Thence began a friendship for that interesting man, that singular mixture of friend and fiend, radical and critic, metaphysician, poet and painter, on whose word no one could rely, on whose heart no one could calculate, and some of whose deductions he himself would try to explain in vain."

Hazlitt, eight years Haydon's senior, had at that time just settled in London and was commencing his journalistic career. He was living in Milton's house at 19 York Street as a tenant of Jeremy Bentham, who occupied an adjoining mansion. Seven years before, Hazlitt had given up his attempt to become a painter; the intervening years had been devoted to the study of philosophy, politics, and metaphysics. His literary career was really just getting under way.

The acquaintance between the two men soon became intimate, and during the next few years they saw each other frequently. Their relationship was a peculiar one. Neither had anything very pleasant to say about the other, but it is apparent that they were attracted to each other nonetheless. Hazlitt was not above sneering at Haydon's

art and honesty; yet each loved an argument and found the other stimulating. Hazlitt would frequently call at Haydon's to inspect *Solomon*, and he usually had some fault to find with it. Northcote came too, at times, and sometimes Charles Lamb.

Haydon had probably met Lamb through their mutual friend Leigh Hunt. Haydon was very fond of Lamb, but it is apparent that they were never particularly intimate. For some years, however, they saw each other frequently; but as they had little in common except their friends and a relish for historical painting, it is not surprising that their friendship did not develop more fully. It has been suggested that Lamb had Haydon in mind when he pictured "Ralph Bigod" in his essay "The Two Races of Men." Lamb himself stated that Bigod's prototype was one Fenwick, "a living scoundrel, lurking about the Pothouses," but some of the traits were, as Leslie says, Haydon's. It will be recalled that Bigod was remarkable for his freedom with other people's money and for his skill in borrowing.

Bigod had an *undeniable* way with him. He had a cheerful, open exterior, a quick jovial eye, a bald forehead, just touched with grey (*cana fides*). He anticipated no excuse, and found none. And . . . I would put it to the most untheorising reader . . . whether it is not more repugnant to the kindness of his nature to refuse such a one as I am describing, than to say *no* to a poor petitionary rogue (your bastard borrower) who, by his mumping visnomy, tells you that he expects nothing better.

One of the occasions on which Lamb and Haydon met was at a christening party at Hazlitt's in honor of Hazlitt's son, William, then three years old. Haydon, fortified by a large lunch—"as I knew all parties"—arrived at four, to find that his host had neglected the formality of obtaining a parson. The ceremony languished and finally had to be called off, no clergyman being obtainable at that hour. Somewhat later in the evening, "the company began to drop in—Charles Lamb and his poor sister—all sorts of odd clever people. Still no dinner. At last came in a maid who laid a cloth and put down knives and forks in a heap. Then followed a dish of potatoes, cold, waxy, and yellow. Then came a great bit of beef with a bone like a battering-ram, toppling on all its corners. Neither Hazlitt nor Lamb seemed at all disturbed, but set to work

helping each other; while the boy, half clean and obstinate, kept squalling to put his fingers into the gravy."

Of the other literary friends of this period, Thomas Barnes, editor of the *Times* and one of Hunt's familiars, and Bryan Waller Procter, "Barry Cornwall," played only minor roles in Haydon's acquaintance. John Scott, editor of the *Champion*, however, whom Haydon met about this time, proved a staunch defender and friend; and although they later quarreled and separated, Haydon felt real sorrow and regret at Scott's tragic death in 1821.

During the last months of 1813, Haydon's health became worse. His anxiety to complete his gigantic painting, the pressure of his debts and difficulties bore down upon him heavily. On December 23 he painted from ten in the morning until three o'clock the following morning—the longest stretch he ever did. But early in 1814, *Solomon* was completed, and after some deliberation he decided to send it to the Exhibition of the Society of Painters in Oil and Water Colours in Spring Gardens. His eyes, meanwhile, were almost completely exhausted. Adams, an oculist, visited him, arriving just in time to prevent an apothecary from opening the temporal artery. This, Haydon believed, saved his eyesight. Adams further advised a generous diet which Haydon could not afford. The painter sent for a wine merchant, showed him *Solomon*, and asked him whether an artist, after such an effort, should be without the wine which his physician had prescribed. "Certainly not," said the good vintner. "I'll send you two dozen; pay me as soon as you can, and recollect to drink success to Solomon the first glass you taste."

On February 17, Benjamin West, President of the Royal Academy, then a man of seventy-five, called to inspect the picture and was, Haydon says, "affected to tears by the mother." West was himself then completing his *Christ Rejected by Caiaphas*, a gargantuan canvas, thirty-four feet long and sixteen feet high, which was exhibited that fall, with much publicity, and for which he was reputed to have refused an offer of £10,000. He had only recently lost his very liberal income from poor mad King George III, but on the afternoon of his visit he sent Haydon a draft for £15 which he hoped would be "adquate to keep the wolfe" from the door. Haydon was touched and grateful.

Sometime in April, Haydon sent *Solomon* to Spring Gardens, and with "a thin and hectic frame, quivering eyes and trembling hand . . . prepared to glaze it on the days allowed."

He took stock of his resources. *Macbeth* was still unsold. *Solomon*, although it had aroused considerable comment while in the painting room, had yet to be subjected to the public view. His debts amounted to £1100. Four hundred of this was owed to his landlord, forty-nine to John O'Groats. He owed his colourman, Carpenter, for the frame of *Solomon*; innumerable personal debts brought up the total. "As I tottered down the Haymarket I leaned on a post and said: 'What shall I do if it do not sell?' 'Order another canvas,' said the voice within, 'and begin a greater work.' 'So I will,' I inwardly replied and thenceforth lost all despondence."

The painting was well hung at the exhibition, but the private view was somewhat discouraging. The Princess Charlotte attended with Payne Knight and found the picture "distorted stuff," but Haydon persuaded the officials that "Honest John Bull" would reach a different verdict. And he was right, for as the exhibition progressed, *Solomon* became more and more popular. On the first day the artist was offered £500 for it, a sum which with fear and trembling he refused. On the third day the officials of the gallery decided to meet his price, 600 guineas, only to discover that the painting had just been sold to Sir William Elford and Mr. Tinge-combe, bankers, of Plymouth.

Haydon's success was received with a flood of flattery and congratulation. Wilkie wrote his pleasure on April 25, and on the same day entered in his journal: "it looked exceedingly well, and seemed to make a most decided impression." Leigh Hunt, on May 5, sent Haydon his congratulations from gaol. Sir George Beaumont was completely reconciled. Farington, who had Sir George's report of the affair, wrote: "He went up & congratulated Him upon the great merit of His picture . . . & Haydon recd. His address most warmly & with both hands ["before a crowded room," Haydon adds]." Sir George then spoke to Farington about an attack upon him in the *Examiner* "in which though not by name He was stated to have acted toward Haydon unjustly. I sd. that was written by Robt. Hunt.—He remarked that Hunt must have had the matter improv-



erly stated to him." But friendly relations were completely restored, and on August 2, after Haydon's return from France, Farington found Haydon calling upon Beaumont. And the following year Sir George gave Haydon a 200 guinea commission, advancing fifty guineas on account. The Academy, too, was impressed, and, according to James Elmes and Frederic Haydon, made overtures to the painter, but he "chose to remain out."

*The Judgment of Solomon* deserves a further word of comment. Several critics have called it the best of all Haydon's paintings, notably Tom Taylor, the editor of his *Autobiography* and journals, and G. F. Watts, the artist. Hazlitt reviewed it favorably in the *Morning Chronicle* for May 4 and 5, 1814, where, after some carping at Haydon's more obvious faults, he concluded that the picture was "decidedly superior to any of this artist's former productions, and a proof not only of genius, but of improved taste and judgment." On the motion of Sir George Beaumont, seconded by Lord Mulgrave, the British Institution voted Haydon a present of 100 guineas in admiration of the painting. After various vicissitudes it seems to have passed into private hands and has now disappeared. So far as I know, there are no reproductions of it.

The exhibition at Spring Gardens continued for some time. Sir William Elford, pleased with his acquisition, wrote Mary Russell Mitford, his young and dear friend, recommending Haydon to her and advising her to see his picture. She and another young lady decided to visit the exhibition. They arrived just as the doors were about to close for the day, but a half-crown persuaded the doorman to admit them, particularly as they wished to see only the one picture. "Our delight was sincerely felt," said Miss Mitford, telling about it years later, "and most enthusiastically expressed, as we kept gazing at the picture, and seemed, unaccountably to us at first, to give much pleasure to the only gentleman who had remained in the room—a young and very distinguished-looking person, who had watched with evident amusement our negotiation with the door-keeper. Beyond indicating the best position to look at the picture, he had no conversation with us; but I soon surmised that we were seeing the painter, as well as his painting; and when, two or three years afterwards, a friend took me by appointment to view the

'Entry into Jerusalem,' . . . I found I had not been mistaken." Miss Mitford was deeply impressed by the beauty of the painting and wrote to her grandmother shortly afterward: "The evening sun, with its fine mellow light, was just on the figures . . . such a picture I never beheld. All that has been said of it falls short of its beauty."

The 600 guineas were a godsend to Haydon. He was in a frenzy of nervous triumph.

My landlord's honest joy was exquisite to me. I paid him £200, and he drew [a note] on me for the balance. John O'Groat held out his big hand and almost cried. I paid him £42, 10s. My baker spread my honesty and fame in Mark Lane, which I heard of. I paid him every shilling. My tailor, my coal merchant, my private friends, were all paid. In short £500 went easily the first week, leaving me £130. I did not pay half my debts, but it established my credit. My private friends forebore to press, the Hunts, the foremost.

The world of fashion was favorably impressed, and Haydon was once again in the good graces of the patronizing classes. But no commissions resulted, and as the nervous strain of the exhibition had done his health no good, he decided to take a holiday in France in company with Wilkie. But before he left London another huge canvas was purchased—as the inner voice had prompted—and *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem* was rubbed in.

Wilkie invited Haydon to let his sister stay at his house in Phillimore Place to keep Wilkie's mother and sister company during his absence, and on May 26, 1814 the two friends left London for Brighton where they were to embark. Wilkie's object was to make arrangements for the sale of the engraved plates of his paintings; Haydon hoped to improve his health and to see France, particularly the Louvre. The visit to France lasted, for Wilkie, who came home early because of ill health, until July 6. Haydon remained for some time after Wilkie's departure, visiting spots of recent historical interest, and talking to all sorts of Frenchmen who would discuss their—and his—hero, Napoleon. Haydon had the usual Tory horror of Buonaparte, but he was tireless in searching out firsthand information on the man who had for him all the fascination of evil.

In the *Autobiography* and in three long letters to the Hunts,  
 . . 80

Haydon gives a detailed and interesting account of his French adventure. The Russians were at the time in control of Paris. Napoleon was at Elba, waiting his opportunity; Louis XVIII was king of France. Haydon's picture of the riotous and kaleidoscopic life in the French capital is vivid and lively. But,

Notwithstanding Paris was filled with all the nations of the earth, the greatest oddity in it was unquestionably David Wilkie. His horrible French, his strange, tottering, feeble, pale look, his carrying about his prints to make bargains with the printsellers, his resolute determination never to leave the restaurants till he got all his change right to a centime; his long disputes about *sous* and *demisous* with the *dame du comptoir*; whilst madame tried to cheat him, and as she pressed her pretty ringed fingers on his arm without making the least impression, her "*Mais, Monsieur,*" and his Scotch "*Mais, Madame,*" were worthy of Moliere.

It was like Haydon to notice and enjoy the contrast. He was always intensely alive, never jaded. Living, for Haydon, was, even to those last bitter days of failure and ruin, a romantic and invigorating course to be run. True, there were always one's enemies; but the romantic relishes enemies, obstacles, so long as there is a goal to reach, a Grail to reward the tortuous search.

He found the Louvre somewhat disappointing at first. The gallery was of inordinate length and looked small. But the glory of the paintings soon reconciled him, for there were displayed the artistic spoils of the Napoleonic conquests—such a collection as has never before or since been assembled in one place. Farington relates that after Haydon's return his naive disappointment at the relatively small size of the works of the Great Masters caused some amusement, but Haydon himself has not recorded this complaint. During his visit to Paris, Haydon seems to have dined with the French Academy, and there is a possibility that he made there the acquaintance of Canova.

On his return, Haydon found that his health had not been much benefited; and as soon as he received his 100 guineas from the British Institution, he set off for Hastings for two weeks' further vacation. His eyes were still bothering him, and he was resolved to rest, something he had been unable to do in the seething France of 1814. On September 26, while he was still at Hastings, the Mayor

and Commonalty of Plymouth voted him the Freedom of the City. This action, which pleased Haydon enormously, was taken upon the motion of Haydon's friend and admirer Mr. George Eastlake, a Plymouth lawyer and the father of Haydon's pupil, Charles Locke Eastlake. The painter was, in the language of the resolution, "nominated and elected a Burgess or Freeman of this borough [Plymouth] as a testimony of respect for his extraordinary merit as a historical painter, and particularly for the production of his recent picture, 'The Judgment of Solomon,' a work of such superior excellence as to reflect honour on his birthplace, distinction on his name, lustre on the art, and reputation on the country." As soon as he received word of this honor, Haydon communicated the thrilling news to Leigh Hunt. On September 30, he replied to the Mayor of Plymouth, assuring him of his gratitude and purpose to persevere, and exhorting the Commonalty on High Art. The Plymouth resolution and Haydon's reply were published shortly afterward in the *Examiner*. Haydon soon returned to London and began again on *Jerusalem*.

During 1815 Haydon's ill health continued. Late in August he was compelled to take another vacation, this time at Brighton with Prince Hoare and Wilkie. By the first of November he was back, somewhat refreshed, but for the next five years he suffered from recurrent sieges of illness and debility.

In his journals for this period appear a number of references to his interest in the theater. In the *Autobiography* he speaks of "being perpetually about M[aria] F[oote]" and of seeing a great deal of actors and actresses. His son supplies the somewhat surprising information that Haydon used to escort Maria Foote to and from the theater and that he experienced a good deal of the life behind the scenes. But the painter did not altogether approve of the somewhat irregular lives of the players, and his son in this connection repeats Dr. Johnson's remark to Garrick: "Oh, Davy, Davy, the silk stockings and the white bosoms of your actresses excite my amorous propensities!"<sup>8</sup> On October 28, 1814 Haydon commented favorably on Kean's quiet acting; on May 19, 1815 he saw Miss O'Neill in *Isabella* and was greatly affected. Elsewhere he speaks of having known Miss Harriot Mellon, afterwards Mrs.

<sup>8</sup> What Dr. Johnson really said was disclosed in the recently published Boswell papers.

Coutts, and afterwards the Duchess of St. Albans, and of having dined with her and Maria Foote at Holly House.

Eighteen hundred fifteen was, first of all, the year of Waterloo, and Haydon's journals are full of his excitement over the victory. In the past he had obtained a number of his models from the Life Guards. Five of these former models were in the battle, of whom the Corporal Major, Hodgson, was the only survivor. Some months after Waterloo, Haydon, with the connivance of Wilkie and John Scott, gathered several of the wounded together in his rooms and pumped them of their stories of the battle. The three civilians revelled in vicarious bravery and slaughter. About this time, too, a sum of £500,000 was voted by Parliament for the erection of a Waterloo Monument, and the advice of the Royal Academy was asked; but as no reply was made, the plan fell through. Haydon, of course, was deeply incensed. The *Examiner* published several bitter anonymous letters on the subject, one of which, signed "E[nglish] S[tudent]" is undoubtedly his work. Other matters agitated the world of art in 1815. The exhibition of old masters at the British Institution was arousing a stir of criticism and appreciation. The Elgin Marbles, still unpurchased by the nation, were being deprecated and Lord Elgin's motives were being attacked. Haydon was on the alert, preparing himself for future struggles in which he should play his part.

Still badly in debt, he made little progress during the year. He had already fallen into the hands of the money lenders, who obliged him at sixty percent interest.<sup>9</sup> As one note would fall due, he would meet it by raising money on another. This process kept his credit intact, but its costs were ruinous. Providentially, Mr. George (later Sir George) Phillips of Manchester dropped in one morning and gave him a commission for £500. More to the point, he advanced the painter £100. Under this stimulus Haydon "went on like a hero, and the £100 was soon visible in the centurion's nape, hand and armour"; for he had been advancing *Jerusalem* throughout the year. This sum, plus subsequent sums from the same source—for Haydon did not scruple to draw further advances from his new

<sup>9</sup> According to his son, Haydon's punctuality was later rewarded by a lowering of the interest rate to forty percent.

patron—were his one certain source of income during the next three years. The picture which ultimately became Sir George Phillips's was *Christ's Agony in the Garden*, by Haydon's own account and by that of most critics the "worst picture ever escaped from my pencil." Sir George's picture was not commenced until 1820, and was rushed through in order to fulfil the obligation which the painter had incurred. The £500 had long since been spent. Haydon's intentions were usually honest, but it did not always pay to treat him too generously; although in all fairness it must be said that he admitted and regretted this debacle.

On November 10 Haydon got permission to mould from the Elgin Marbles. He set promptly to work, expecting that professional jealousy would soon interfere, and by December 6 "the cream of the collection was secured." His painting room and ante-room were crowded with the casts. Many people came to see them, and in the midst of Haydon's excitement, Antonio Canova, the eminent Italian sculptor, arrived in London. Canova had been to Paris as a representative of the Pope, in order to superintend the removal of the Italian paintings and sculptures which Napoleon had plundered. He came to England for the express purpose of viewing the Elgin Marbles. Haydon was breathless with excitement. Would this great artist, this great connoisseur substantiate all the glowing things Haydon had said about these divine fragments? Through William Richard Hamilton of the Foreign Office, Haydon obtained an introduction. Immediately upon being introduced, he put his somewhat leading question:

"Ne croyez-vous pas que le style qui existe dans les marbres d'Elgin est supérieur à celui de tous les autres marbres connus?" "Sans doute," was his reply, "la vérité est telle, les accidents de la chair et les formes sont si vraies et si belles, que ces statues produiront un grand changement dans les arts. Ils renverseront le système mathématique des autres."

Haydon was "in raptures." His "victory was now complete."

The next day Canova called upon Haydon to see the *Jerusalem*. He seemed greatly pleased. Haydon was delighted and arranged to meet and talk with this eminent foreigner several times during his stay. On November 27 he dined at Hamilton's to meet Canova. The next day he took him to see the Duke of Devonshire's lions,

and "setting aside all animosities" took him also to see Turner, whose genius Canova admired.<sup>10</sup> They also visited Northcote, and Haydon, whose vision was always colored by his own emotions, says that the old artist blenched and shrank with shame as he showed Canova his pictures, portraits all. On Canova's departure Haydon sent him "a great folio edition of Milton." "He was really delighted," Haydon wrote to Leigh Hunt, "and I think I beat the Academy dogs, who gave him a paltry dinner and bad wine—Magnificent way of showing feeling for a genius—yah!"<sup>11</sup> Haydon also sent Hunt a copy of Canova's letter of thanks. He was very proud of it.

During 1815 Haydon's friendship with the Hunts, Hazlitt, and John Scott continued. It was about this time that his intimacy with Wordsworth began. Their acquaintance had probably commenced several years earlier, through the good offices of their mutual friend Sir George Beaumont. On April 13, while Haydon was taking the poet's life mask, John Scott called.

Wordsworth was sitting in the other room in my dressing-gown, with his hands folded, sedate, solemn and still. I stepped in to Scott and told him as a curiosity to take a peep, that he might say the first sight he ever had of so great a poet was in this stage towards immortality.

I opened the door slowly, and there he sat innocent and unconscious of our plot, in mysterious stillness and silence.

When he was relieved he came in to breakfast with his usual cheerfulness and delighted us by his bursts of inspiration.<sup>12</sup>

After breakfast they called on Leigh Hunt, who, since his release

<sup>10</sup> Haydon never quarreled with Turner, excepted him, in fact, in his attack on the Academicians in the "Somniator Visions" in the *Annals*. His opinion of Turner's genius and influence was, however, not high; "Turner's pictures look to me as if they were the works of a savage suddenly excited to do his best to convey to his fellow-men his intense impressions of the scenery of nature. Without the slightest power of giving form, he devotes himself to giving the effects and colour of what he sees. It is so much easier to give effects only . . . than to combine correct form with effect, like Titian. . . ."

"On what metaphysical principles genius can be proved to exist in a picture, because every rational person mistakes an elm-tree for a cabbage; or how making the sun look like a brass kettle, or a man with a lighted torch like a bit of red ochre at the end of a porte-crayon, is undeniable evidence, for that reason alone, the man who so painted is a great man, I have yet to learn."

<sup>11</sup> Wilkie's comment was that the Academy had honored Canova in the "good old English way, by inviting him to dinner at the Academy."

<sup>12</sup> On July 24 Haydon made a cast of Wilkie's face; there is also a life mask of Keats ascribed to Haydon. Three years later Haydon did the chalk drawing of Wordsworth's head which is herein reproduced as engraved by Thomas Landseer in 1831.

from prison on February 2, had been in poor health. Ten days later, Haydon and Wordsworth breakfasted together again and had two hours of pleasant talk. On June 18, the painter called on Wordsworth and for the first time met Henry Crabb Robinson, who entered the event in his diary:

Scott, editor of the *Champion*, and Haydon the painter stayed a considerable time. Scott is a little swarthy man. He talked fluently on French politics. . . .

Haydon has an animated countenance, but did not say much. Both he and Scott seemed to entertain a high reverence for the poet.

On September 12 Wordsworth wrote to Haydon from Lowther Castle regarding a bust of himself which another artist proposed to make. "I have not forgotten your request," the poet continued, "to have a few verses of my composition in my own handwriting, and the first short piece that I compose, if it be not totally destitute of merit, shall be sent to you." Wordsworth also expressed his hope of receiving a drawing from Haydon's pencil, and his interest in the progress of *Jerusalem*. "I cannot doubt that the picture will do you huge credit, and raise the reputation of the Art in this country . . . Mrs. Wordsworth and I often remember the agreeable hours which we passed in your company, and . . . we cherish the hope, in the course of next season, we may see you at Rydal Mount." Haydon replied on November 27, describing Canova's visit, particularly the shaming of Northcote.

On December 21 the promised autograph was sent, and to his great joy Haydon discovered that the last of the three sonnets enclosed was addressed directly to him.<sup>13</sup>

#### TO B. R. HAYDON

High is our calling, Friend!—Creative Art  
 (Whether the instrument of words she use,  
 Or pencil pregnant with ethereal hues,)  
 Demands the service of a mind and heart,  
 Though sensitive, yet, in their weakest part,  
 Heroically fashioned—to infuse  
 Faith in the whispers of the lonely Muse,

<sup>13</sup>The other two sonnets were those beginning: "While not a leaf seems faded, while the fields," and the better known "How clear, how keen, how marvellously bright."



When the whole world seems adverse to desert.  
And, oh! when Nature sinks, as oft she may,  
Through long-lived pressure of obscure distress,  
Still to be strenuous for the bright reward,  
And in the soul admit of no decay,  
Brook no continuance of weak-mindedness—  
Great is the glory, for the strife is hard!

Haydon's heart was overflowing. In his letter of thanks to the poet, Haydon called these sonnets "the highest honour that was ever paid, or ever can be paid to me." And his enthusiasm and pride were still strong thirty years later when he wrote:

Now, reader, was this not glorious? And you, young student, when you are pressed down by want in the midst of a great work, remember what followed Haydon's perseverance. The freedom of his native town,—the visit of Canova,—and the sonnet of Wordsworth,—and if these do not cheer you up, and make you go on, you are past all hope.

As he reviewed the year, Haydon felt some sense of satisfaction. *Jerusalem* was progressing as well as could be expected, considering his "misery from weak eyes." Already people were coming to his painting room for a view of it. On September 17, "Evelyn, Jun." in the *Examiner* had reviewed the picture with awe and reverence, although it was still in an unfinished state and "Evelyn, Jun." (William Carey) had not "the honour of knowing the Artist." Too, Mr. Phillips's commission had been timely; and although the burden of his debts was heavy, Haydon did not greatly fear the future. Had not the great Canova admired his painting and supported his views on the Elgin Marbles? Had not Plymouth paid him its highest honor? And—greatest distinction of all—had not Wordsworth whom he venerated addressed a sonnet to him, calling him "Friend" and a fellow in creative art?

CHAPTER  
· FIVE ·

## Crescendo

1816-1821

THE FIVE YEARS between 1816 and 1821 were perhaps the most active and interesting of Haydon's life. It was during these years that he painted and exhibited his most famous work, *Christ's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem*, and directed the policies of the *Annals of the Fine Arts*. These, too, were the years of his intimacy with John Keats, and with Hazlitt, Lamb, John Scott, and Mary Russell Mitford. His eyes were giving him a good deal of trouble, but he was seldom idle, for in addition to his painting and writing he had established his school for young painters and was training his pupils rigorously.

Many years later (1853), Miss Mitford had occasion to describe Haydon to James T. Fields, the American journalist and publisher. Her picture of Haydon in his early 30's is that of a man in his prime, at the height of his powers:

Haydon was, at that period, a remarkable person to look at and listen to. Perhaps your American word *bright* expresses better than any other his appearance and manner. His figure, short, slight, elastic, and vigorous, looked still more light and youthful from the little sailor's-jacket and snowy trousers which formed his painting costume. His complexion was clear and healthful. His forehead, broad and high, out of all proportion to the lower part of his face, gave an unmistakable character of intellect to the finely placed head. Indeed, he liked to observe that the gods of the Greek sculptors owed much of their elevation to being similarly out of drawing! The lower features were terse, succinct, and powerful,—from the bold, decided jaw, to the large, firm, ugly, good-humored mouth. His very spectacles aided the general expression; they had a look of the man. But how shall I attempt to tell you of his brilliant conversation, of his rapid, energetic manner, of his quick turns of thought, as he flew on from topic to topic, dashing his brush here and there upon the canvas? Slow and quiet persons were a good deal

## CRESCENDO

startled by this suddenness and mobility. He left such persons far behind, mentally and bodily. But his talk was so rich and varied, so earnest and glowing, his anecdotes so racy, his perception of character so shrewd, and the whole tone so spontaneous and natural, that the want of repose was rather recalled afterwards than felt at the time. The alloy to this charm was a slight coarseness of voice and accent, which contrasted somewhat strangely with his constant courtesy and high breeding.

"Perhaps this was characteristic," added Miss Mitford in the light of her later experiences with the painter. "A defect of some sort pervades his pictures. Their great want is equality and congruity,—that perfect union of qualities which we call *taste*."

In the early spring of 1816, the Elgin Marbles were on trial. The Government had appointed a Committee to investigate the marbles and to make recommendations regarding their purchase. Haydon and William Richard Hamilton both appeared before the Committee on February 23 in Lord Elgin's behalf. Hamilton, who had superintended the transportation of the marbles to England in 1802, was Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs: his testimony carried weight.

Haydon kept Leigh Hunt well informed. Two of his letters, now in the British Museum, show something of Haydon's relations with the editor of the *Examiner*. The first is dated February 21, 1816.

My dear Hunt

I have read, and reread your exquisite pathetic tale [*The Story of Rimini*], till my soul is cut in two—and every nerve about me pierced with trembling needles—I can say no more till we meet, but that it is the sweetest thing of the time, and that the World must think so—you shall find when we do meet, that not the most secret touch of humanity in it, has been passed without shaking me to the core—

Adieu, it will establish your genius—Your affectionate friend my dear Hunt

B. R. Haydon

When you send me my copy write from His affectionate Friend—Leigh Hunt—and not—the Author—let it be on the title page I entreat—Believe me my dear Hunt nothing would give me greater delight than a Sonnet from you, and when you write me a sonnet I'll paint a Picture from your Poem—a bargain—do not forget that *your* Portrait is the only one I have painted or probably ever will—I can't say enough to you about your tale, if every body is affected as I have been there will not be a heart without a pang, or

an eye without a tear in the Kingdom—I should have answered your affectionate letter before—but have been ill with sore throat & hoarseness—

The second letter, in addition to a somewhat incoherent apologia, contains a reference to Haydon's experience before the Committee. It is dated March 1, 1816.

As the examination progressed, the testimony became conflicting—a not unusual result of consulting expert witnesses. In the main, the professionals—Nollekins, Flaxman, Westmacott, Chantrey, and Rossi, sculptors, and Lawrence and West, painters—were favorable to the marbles. Their answers to the questions of the Committee were, however, somewhat confusing. This is not to be wondered at as they were asked to compare the Theseus and Ilissus of the Elgin collection with the Apollo Belvedere and the Laocöon. The amateurs or “connoisseurs” who were examined showed less unanimity. Some of them were favorable, but Payne Knight, one of the most influential, gave his preference to the Apollo. The Theseus, he said, was a spurious addition of the time of Hadrian, and some of the Elgin metopes were “very poor.”

On the whole, however, the members of the Committee were favorably impressed, and the purchase of the collection seemed assured. Unfortunately, just at that time the Phigalian Marbles arrived in England, and Payne Knight and his friends began to cry their superiority over Lord Elgin's. Haydon was furious; and enlisting John Scott's support, he attacked Payne Knight again, this time in the columns of the *Champion*. The day for the final examination before the Committee arrived. Lord Elgin had named Haydon and two others as his witnesses, and the painter awaited eagerly his opportunity. The call did not come. Haydon was not summoned, “out of delicacy to Knight,” Hamilton told him.

But, as he had written Hunt, he was resolved to make himself heard, and “retiring to my painting-room with my great picture of Jerusalem before me I dashed down on paper thoughts and truths which neither nobility nor patrons ever forgave.” His article, which he later published as a pamphlet, was entitled “On the Judgment of Connoisseurs being preferred to that of Professional Men.—The Elgin Marbles, &c.” He sent it to the *Champion* and to the *Examiner*, in both of which it was published over his signature. He later in-

cluded it, with minor textual variations, in the *Autobiography*. In its pamphlet form, Haydon had it translated into Italian and French and sent 100 copies of it to Florence, 100 to Rome, and 200 to St. Petersburg. It was a direct attack upon the artistic pretensions of the very classes from whom he might expect to receive commissions and support. Payne Knight was singled out; but the tone of the whole was unflattering to all of his class. The opening sentences may stand as typical:

That the nobility and higher classes of this country have so little dependence on their own judgment in art is principally owing to a defect in their education. In neither University is painting ever remembered. . . .

With this attack, Haydon also delivered himself of an eloquent defense of the purity, antiquity, and beauty of the Elgin Marbles. The article was well and forcibly written; and although the remarks on Knight may seem unnecessarily abusive, one may admire Haydon's courage and sincerity if not his judgment. It was a foolhardy thing for a man in his position to do, and like many of his essays into print, "The Judgment of Connoisseurs" caused an unfavorable reaction against its author. Lord Mulgrave had proposed to the British Institution that Haydon be sent abroad to study, but the violence of his attack upon one of the directors of that body made such an act impossible. Several friends protested against his writing. Seymour Kirkup, who had removed to Rome, wrote him somewhat later:

Consider, my dear friend, *you are born to paint*. How many dirty little souls are *brought up* to write better than you? Postpone publishers, and devote your powers wholly to your brush. Your publications should come at the end of your career. . . . Remember, the cause *depends entirely upon you*. Weigh my advice.

Charles Hayter also urged him to stop writing, as did William Carey in his *Critical Description of [West's] "Death on the Pale Horse"* (1817); but Wayborn, an "accomplished friend," encouraged him to continue. Haydon, however, who had learned perhaps too well how a Man of Decision should act, was even less likely than most persons to take advice, good or bad; and on the whole he was not displeased at the publicity which his writing had obtained for the marbles and for himself.

Shortly thereafter, the Committee decided upon the purchase of

the Elgin collection for the nation. The sum of £35,000 was agreed upon, less, Haydon says, than the marbles had cost Lord Elgin. But in any event, the affair had been concluded as Haydon desired, and he felt, with some justification, a strong sense of personal triumph.

On May 20, 1816, Haydon finally disposed of *Macbeth*. Sir George Beaumont, reconciled with the painter, agreed to accept the picture in lieu of the new one he had commissioned at £200. Sir George's feeling toward Haydon at that time was expressed in an undated letter, an answer to Wilkie's letter of December 12, 1816.

Your account of Haydon's progress gives me sincere pleasure: every thing may be expected from him if he exerts himself uniformly; and such is his enthusiasm, I think there cannot be any doubt of that. You assuredly know that I have *The Macbeth*; for, although the size is a serious inconvenience to me, yet the picture remaining upon his hands gave me uneasiness; and upon his expressing his wish that I would take it instead of the one he was about to begin for me I complied; for my first wish was to serve him. Indeed, excepting the size of the figure of *Macbeth*, in which he has however shown great power, although I think he failed, the picture is very fine, the colouring is excellent, and many parts perhaps equal to anything he will ever do.

Early in 1817, the Russian Grand Duke Nicholas arrived in London during the course of his "grand tour," and Haydon, who loved to make contact with great names, obtained an introduction. The presentation was carefully maneuvered. According to Farington, "Haydon was placed purposely, but as if accidentally among the Marbles, & when the Grand Duke came a Russian Artist [Sauerweid] introduced Haydon to Him." Haydon made it a point to refer to his uncle Copley, the Russian general, and the Duke displayed considerable interest. But the painter evidently over-reached himself by mentioning this to Sauerweid, for nothing came of the introduction.<sup>1</sup> There was, of course, some publicity, which did not displease Haydon. In fact he later said candidly: "I was now a very great man in my own eyes. I had a notion at one time of wearing mustachios, but that went off. I set to work and advanced my great picture well and heartily. The interest about it was so intense

<sup>1</sup>Unless the correspondence with M. Alexis Olenin, President of the Imperial Academy of Arts at St. Petersburg, late in the year, was a result. Olenin sent Haydon two casts from the Imperial collection. Haydon reciprocated with some from the Elgin Marbles and was, therefore, according to Elmes, "the first to introduce them into Russia."

that my room was always full of English or foreigners. The presentation to the Grand Duke had made a great noise. . . ."

During the year, Haydon was more than ordinarily active in society. In January he had been introduced to Lord Yarmouth who showed the painter his pictures and gratified him by courteous and respectful treatment. In June Haydon attended the farewell dinner to Kemble, the actor, and listened to the compliments on all sides until he was weary. "Lord Holland flattered Kemble; Kemble flattered Lord Holland. Then Campbell, the poet, flattered Moore (whom I knew he hated), but Tom Moore, like an honest sensible genius, as he is, said not a word, but drank his wine and—flattered no one." Kemble was, on the whole, Haydon felt, "a regular actor but not a great one." He much preferred Kean, one of whose "bursts" in *Othello* was worth "all Kemble's life and the lives of fifty Kembles." In August he attended a private view at the Duchess of Marlborough's, having written her previously asking that he be permitted to spend the entire two hours among the Rubenses.

Meanwhile he was becoming increasingly dissatisfied with his lodgings in Great Marlborough Street. His painting room was small and poorly ventilated; his health suffered. Finally he obtained temporary rooms in Somers Town, near the home of E. H. Baily, the sculptor, who was at the time doing "a most speaking bust" of him.<sup>2</sup> Three hundred pounds, he estimated, would be required to cover the expenses of moving, and such a sum seemed quite unobtainable. Finally he thought of a former acquaintance, Mr. Jeremiah Harman, who generously advanced him the required amount;<sup>3</sup> and Haydon moved to 22, Lisson Grove North, a new thoroughfare, into a house owned by John Charles Felix Rossi, R.A., the sculptor. There he had, the *Annals* reported, "a painting-room of great dimensions,

<sup>2</sup>This was exhibited at the Academy in 1818. The *Sun's* comment was: "If Mr. Haydon is so furious a fellow as this bust represents him, we tremble for the Academicians!" Baily, a student in the R.A. schools since 1809, became A.R.A. in 1817, R.A. in 1821.

<sup>3</sup>In his journal for November 6, 1841 (but not in the *Autobiography*), Haydon recorded that Mr. Harman had advanced him £1000 to carry him through *Jerusalem* and *Lazarus*. "I was ruined," he added, "and he lost his money. He was angry with me, and it was just; but the moment he heard I was ruined, he sent over to Kearsley and Spurr, my solicitors, and released me from the debt." He noted further that twenty years after this event, a reconciliation took place.

and ante-rooms for his numerous casts, with every accommodation for him to pursue his art with comfort, and without being cramped, as heretofore."

The locality has changed, but Haydon's house is still standing; the address is No. 1, Rossmore Road, and the scene of the immortal dinner has become a meeting house of the Plymouth Brethren. Haydon's painting room was about 35 feet long by 21 feet broad, with a fireplace in the middle on the street side. Mary Russell Mitford, who met the painter about this time, remembered the appearance of his apartment. "Besides the great picture itself, for which there seemed hardly space between the walls, it was crowded with casts, lay figures, arms, tripods, vases, draperies, and costumes of all ages, weapons of all nations, books in all tongues. These cumbered the floor; whilst around hung smaller pictures, sketches, and drawings, replete with originality and force. . . . Among the studies I remarked that day in his apartment was one of a mother who had just lost her only child,—a most masterly rendering of an unspeakable grief.<sup>4</sup> A sonnet, which I could not help writing on this sketch, gave rise to our long correspondence, and to a friendship which never flagged."

The sonnet which Miss Mitford addressed to Haydon was at once appreciative and tearful. It came at a time when he was well accustomed to poetic adulation, having already received similar and even more glowing tributes from Wordsworth, Leigh Hunt, John Hamilton Reynolds, and John Keats. But he never wearied of the praise of poets; and the following lines, "To Mr. Haydon on a Study from Nature, exhibited at the Spring Garden Exhibition, 1817," no doubt pleased him.

"Su le labbre un sospir, su gli occhi un pianto." Tasso.

"Tears in the eye, and on the lips a sigh!"

Haydon! the great, the beautiful, the bold,

Thy wisdom's king, thy mercy's god unfold;

These art and genius blend in union high,

But this is of the soul. The majesty

Of grief dwells here; grief cast in such a mould

<sup>4</sup>This may be the "Study—1813" which Frederic Haydon reproduced in *Correspondence and Table-Talk*, II, 264.



As Niobe's of yore. The tale is told  
 All at a glance. "A childless mother I!"  
 The tale is told—and who can e'er forget  
 That e'er had seen a visage of despair!  
 With unaccustomed tears our cheeks are wet,  
 Heavy our hearts with unaccustomed care,  
 Upon our thoughts it presses like a debt,  
 We close our eyes in vain; that face is there.<sup>5</sup>

Although their correspondence apparently had begun some months before, Haydon and Miss Mitford were first introduced in May 1817. She had called earlier in the year but had failed to see him. Through Captain Harness, a mutual friend, the introduction was at last performed in Haydon's painting room. Miss Mitford, then thirty, a year younger than Haydon, was well established as a writer of provincial fiction. She was delighted by the painter's quarters and by his person: "his *bonhomie*, his *naïvété*, and his enthusiasm." She did, however, feel it "a thousand pities he should be such a fright!" They shared another friend, Sir William Elford of Plymouth, co-purchaser of *Solomon* in 1814; and before that first meeting was over, Haydon had established one of the most pleasant and lasting of his literary friendships.

In Haydon, Miss Mitford, who had great respect for manly qualities, found a "manly, noble, independent spirit" whom she could most wholeheartedly admire. "He was a sort of Benvenuto Cellini," she wrote to a friend, six years after the painter's death, "or rather he was like Shakespeare's description of the Dauphin's horse—"all air and fire—the duller elements of earth and water never appeared in him.' Any thing so rapid, so brilliant, so vigorous as his talk, I have never known. His letters give you some notion of that." Even on first acquaintance she thought him "quite one of the old heroes come to life again—one of Shakespeare's men—full of spirit, and endurance, and moral courage."

In Miss Mitford, Haydon had a loyal and unselfish friend, one to whom he could write and speak freely of what was nearest his heart, without fear of jealousy or misunderstanding. To her he

<sup>5</sup>"Thy wisdom's king" refers to the *Judgment of Solomon*; "thy mercy's god" to *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem*. The reference to "a debt" in the penultimate line is, of course, entirely innocent.

wrote the liveliest and best of his letters. Her own inclinations toward genre-writing evidently encouraged Haydon to indulge his fancy for character and humor. In addition, he revealed to her much of his intimate life: his love for Mary, his fondness for his children, the irritations of domestic life, and many recollections and anecdotes of Keats, Hazlitt, Wordsworth, Hunt, and others, together with his opinions on all sorts of subjects, political and literary as well as artistic. As she told Fields, she acted as "a sort of safety-valve to that ardent spirit." There was, however, one drawback, as she confessed to Sir William, "to the honor and pleasure of receiving such letters—the dreadful necessity of answering them. I am as afraid of Mr. Haydon as a school-boy of the rod. I don't know why, except that one's very paper blushes at the idea of encountering those tremendous eyes. And writing under fear, my letters are the most prim, correct, well-written, stupid un-idea'd sheets of inanity that ever issued from the desk of a young lady. . . ." But, she concluded, he "is a delightful person, notwithstanding my awe."

Throughout his life, Haydon's zeal led him all too frequently into print. During the years when eye strain made painting difficult, and *Jerusalem* stood for weeks untouched, the painter laid aside his brushes and devoted himself to directing the policies of a new periodical which had made its appearance in the world of art. The *Annals of the Fine Arts* was started in 1816 by James Elmes, and continued during its five years of life under his direction and editorship. Elmes was an architect of some standing. In 1809 he had been vice president of the Royal Architectural Society, and during his years in London he had designed and erected a number of buildings. He had met Haydon shortly after the painter's arrival in the city, through Prince Hoare, and had been, he said, deeply impressed with the young man's modesty and ability. Elmes claimed to have written the first criticism of Haydon ever published, a review of *Joseph and Mary* in the *Monthly Magazine*. He was at the time (1806) a student in architecture at the Royal Academy, and the two young men—Haydon was four years his junior—became close friends.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup>Elmes was later the instructor of John Haviland, a young cousin of Haydon's, who came to America in 1816 and made a considerable reputation as a prison architect.

When Elmes founded the *Annals*, Haydon was consulted and soon became the ruling voice in its management. The *Annals* was an octavo quarterly, well printed and edited, and is remembered today as the first of the "quality" art magazines in England. The only illustrations it contained were infrequent technical drawings; its appeal was professional rather than general. Reviews of current exhibitions; articles, historical and technical, on art and artists; notices of new books and prints; and an annual directory of English artists made up its contents. Its editorial policy was to expound the principles which Haydon had been advocating. The Academy was under continuous fire; the study of anatomy was strongly advised; the glories of historical painting in general, and the art of B. R. Haydon in particular, were kept well forward. Haydon and his friends and pupils were always in the limelight.

Haydon's contributions to the *Annals* were of several types. "I extracted valuable things," he said later, "from Coypel's *Discourses*, compressed much useful information from Adam's *Antiquities*, and marked or pointed out passages in authors which might do the student good; in fact, I made my reading and experience conducive to the improvement of the young artist." In an article in the third number entitled "Decision of Character, the great requisite for a young Student of Historical Painting in England" and signed "B.R.H.," he praised and largely quoted "Foster's admirable Essay 'on Decision of Character,'" a work which, as we have noted, he frequently recommended to his friends and which had a profound influence on his own career.

He also contributed a number of controversial letters and articles. In the second and third numbers, his early attack on Payne Knight was republished. "This," Haydon said, "at once announced [Elmes's] principles and creed." In the eighth number, Haydon's pamphlet in favor of the government's buying altar pieces for churches was stitched in as a gift to subscribers. His article "On M. Visconti's Error relative to the Action of the Ilissus in the Elgin Collection" he later had translated into French and published as a pamphlet. One of the least tactful of his offerings was his "Vindication of Sir Joshua Reynolds from the Attempts made in Mr. Farington's Memoir to prove that he was wrong in his

Quarrel with the Royal Academy; addressed principally to the Nobility, and to those among them, still living, who were Sir Joshua's Friends." This was certain to offend the powers in the Academy, particularly Farington, "The Dictator."<sup>7</sup>

The *Annals* did not shrink from humor—of a sort—and Haydon was the principal offender. "The Miseries of an Artist" which appeared in the fifteenth number is amusing enough, but the two articles signed "Somniator" are somewhat too strident for modern tastes. These—"The River of Time. A Vision," and "The Other Vision by Somniator"—were broad satirical attacks on the pretensions of some of the leading Academicians, with some vigorous puffs for Haydon.

The *Annals of the Fine Arts* has also some claim to literary notice. Keats contributed to three numbers. His sonnets "To Haydon" and "Written on seeing the Elgin Marbles" appeared in the eighth number; and his "Ode to the Nightingale" and "On a Grecian Urn" were first published, at Haydon's suggestion, in the thirteenth and fifteenth numbers. The odes appeared in 1819, after the "Z" attacks on Keats in *Blackwood's*, and were signed only with a dagger. Hazlitt, who agreed with some of Haydon's ideas on art, allowed four of his essays to be reprinted in the *Annals*: "On Gusto," "On the Character of Sir Joshua Reynolds," "An Account of the Discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds," and "An Inquiry, whether the Fine Arts are promoted by Academies and Public Institutions?" Mary Russell Mitford also contributed her sonnet on Haydon's "Study from Nature"; and Barry Cornwall a "Sonnet to Michel Agnolo."

Haydon's genius for self-advertisement, so apparent in the *Annals*, did not pass unnoticed, and William Carey, an art critic who had previously admired *Jerusalem* in its unfinished state, was moved to protest at length. In 1819 he published his *Desultory exposition of an Anti-British System of Incendiary Publication . . .*

In its original form, however, the article would have been even more offensive. As printed, the last sentence but one reads: "Their praise of Reynolds [i.e., the praise of such men as Farington] is like the charity of guilt, a sort of compromise with an aching remembrance." In a copy of the *Annals* which was once in Haydon's possession he has crossed out the word "guilt" with heavy strokes, and in the margin opposite has written "a whore."

*intended to sacrifice the honour and interests of the British Institution, the Royal Academy, and the whole body of the British Artists and their patrons to the passions . . . of certain disappointed Candidates for prizes*, a direct attack on Haydon, Elmes, and the *Annals*. It may be surmised that this work, which Elmes referred to the following year as "a volume of four hundred and ninety pages in one continuous strain of abuse," contributed to the demise of the periodical it attacked.

Elmes, however, in his valedictory "Preface to the Fifth Volume" made no mention of his critic:

We have . . . resolved on closing the *Annals* with this [the 17th] Number, having accomplished, in a great measure, the object for which we first established it. The Academy is palpably in a state of progressive reformation. Young men of talent and vigour begin to be regularly admitted members at the different elections. We have successfully defended the British Institution from the infamous attacks made upon its members by the *Catalogue Raisonné*; seen Haydon triumphantly established upon the rock of public opinion, and the feeling for historical painting evidently becoming the paramount feeling of the country for art. If the Government could but be induced to lend some aid to second the efforts of our painters, our most sanguine expectations . . . would be realized. Of this we do not despair in the end. . . .

In the same concluding volume, Elmes published his "Memoirs of Benjamin Robert Haydon," a long biographical sketch of his friend. That the tone was entirely laudatory and uncritical, may be seen from Elmes's summing up:

. . . we conclude this memoir with what we said before, that on the success of Haydon and his pupils, depend the taste and art of the country.

. . . we are quite convinced, that if ever a man was born whose talents qualify him to do honour to our country, it is the man whom for years we have been proud to call our friend, BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON.

James Elmes.

Haydon's school got under way the same year as the *Annals* and lasted two years longer. It is not surprising that a man of Haydon's enthusiasm and strong conviction should have gathered about him a group of younger artists who had become fired with his ideas. As early as 1808, Charles Lock Eastlake, still in his teens, had attached himself to Haydon as a pupil and disciple. However, it was not

until the year 1816 that the "school" began definitely to take shape.

In 1815 Mr. Landseer, the engraver, had brought his boys to me and said: "When do you let your beard grow and take pupils?" I said, "If my instructions are useful or valuable, now." "Will you let my boys come?" I said, "Certainly."<sup>8</sup>

Haydon was a rigorous master. His pupils spent hours in the dissecting room, studying the anatomy of man and beast. At one time he secured for them the carcass of a lion which had died in Exeter Change Menagerie; this they dissected and drew with great thoroughness. He obtained permission for them to draw from the Elgin Marbles in the British Museum. These drawings, full size, created, Haydon said, extraordinary astonishment. No one could believe that Englishmen had done them. To Haydon, they proved: "If Englishmen were educated in Art like foreigners they could soon equal or surpass them." Goethe ordered a set for his house at Weimar, and a flattering correspondence ensued, of which Haydon was very proud. One Englishman bought a single drawing, but finding it "a nuisance," returned it to Haydon. No other orders were received.

The following year, 1818, Haydon managed to obtain from the Prince Regent the loan of two of the Raphael Cartoons,<sup>9</sup> probably through the good offices of his friend William Segulier. He had them brought up to London from Hampton Court, apparently over the protests of the Royal Academy, and his students set eagerly to work copying them. In the *Annals* for April 1, 1818 appeared an article ridiculing these activities: "On Mr. Haydon and his Pupils, with an Etching," by John Bailey. Elmes, as editor, protested, perhaps too much, about the unfairness of the article and the accompanying caricature; but it is evident that Haydon was more than willing to obtain this kind of publicity. The comment of Bewick, his star pupil, in a letter to his brother is evidence of this:

<sup>8</sup> John Landseer, A.E., was one of the leading engravers of the time. The Academy did not then admit engravers to full membership on a par with architects, painters, and sculptors. Landseer's failure to persuade the Academy to give engravers full recognition had embittered him somewhat toward that body.

<sup>9</sup> The Raphael Cartoons, perhaps the most important works of art in the Victoria and Albert Museum, were designed by Raphael and painted by him and his assistants at the order of Pope Leo X for a series of tapestries which were completed in 1520. Three of the original ten cartoons are lost; the remaining seven came into the possession of the Royal Family at the time of Charles I. From 1814-1855 they were at Hampton Court.

There will be published in the *Annals of Art* for the 1st of April a caricature representing Haydon and his pupils. Your brother is made most conspicuous, being placed in the centre, and figuring away in a most energetic style.<sup>10</sup> I have had an impression given me. Haydon is flying in the shape of a bird, he has kicked his pallet and colours behind him, and is blowing a trumpet as director of the public taste, with two large pens before him denoting his authorship. It will be the best thing for us that has happened, for it connects us altogether [*sic*], brings us into public notice, and if we produce anything it will tell so much the more. The fools! they cannot see that the more they talk about us the better for us; they cannot annihilate our works; they cannot criticise our drawings, so they show their jealousy in this way. You are free from all this glorious work, this jealousy, this envy...

The chalk drawings from the Cartoons and some of the Elgin Marbles drawings were exhibited early in 1819, and Haydon was immensely gratified by the attendance of the noble and the distinguished. The private day of the exhibition on January 30 called forth another caricature, this one by J. L. Marks: "St. James Street in an Uproar or the Quack Artist and his Assailants." This the *Annals* did not publish: possibly the term "quack" seemed inappropriate.

Of the members of Haydon's school, Eastlake was probably the most distinguished. Later he became prominent in public life, serving as Secretary to the Royal Commission for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament, and, in 1843, as Keeper of the National Gallery. As both the decoration of the Houses and the creation of a National Gallery were favorite projects of Haydon's, he must have felt some gratification at the eminence of his former pupil. It is doubtful, however, that Eastlake altogether relished Haydon's suggestions on these matters, for by 1840 his master was a ruined old man. Four years after Haydon's death, Eastlake was elected President of the Royal Academy and, as was the custom, was knighted.

Next to Eastlake, the three Landseers were the most successful of Haydon's pupils. Of these, Sir Edwin Landseer, the animal painter, is best known. His debt to Haydon is not altogether clear, but he seems to have received a great deal of help and suggestion from Haydon, if not formal instruction. Charles and Thomas Landseer were less distinguished, although the latter made some reputa-

<sup>10</sup>The cartoon the students were copying was *Elymas the Sorcerer Struck with Blindness*.

tion as an engraver. With the Landseers may be mentioned Charles Christmas, an animal painter, who married the Landseers' sister.

William Bewick—who was apparently not related to the celebrated wood engraver, Thomas Bewick—was closer to Haydon than any of his other pupils. An upholsterer's son, he had come up to London in 1816 with the hope of making Haydon's acquaintance. "One day," Haydon says,

while visiting the Elgin Marbles . . . I saw a youth with a good head drawing in a large way. I spoke to him and was pleased by his reply. It ended by an invitation to breakfast. The next day he came and told me his name was Bewick. . . . He entered my school at once, was introduced to the Landseers, proceeded to copy all my dissection drawings and soon became the most prominent pupil of the whole set. William Harvey followed him shortly after, and then another well-educated, accomplished youth, Edward Chatfield. All these young men looked up to me as their instructor and their friend. I took them under my care, taught them everything I knew, explained the principles of Raffe's works, in my collection of his prints, and did the same thing over again which I had done to Eastlake, without one shilling of payment from them any more than from him. They improved rapidly. The gratitude of themselves and of their friends knew no bounds.

To those who will read between the lines, Bewick's letters about this time show both Haydon's childish delight in being considered a great man—and his unselfish helpfulness and generosity. "I have been honoured," Bewick wrote his brother on July 14, 1816, "with the acquaintance of Mr. B. R. Haydon, so much talked of in the papers. He is the first historical painter we have." Six months later he wrote:

You will have heard that my mother received a letter from Mr. Haydon. I wish I could describe my feelings at receiving such a friendship from this great man. He has even gone so far as to lend me money; and when I offered it him again he would not take it. I told him I really did not know how I should be ever able to recompense him for all he had done for me. His answer was, "Only be industrious, and succeed in your art, that is all I require." Think, dear John, what must be my feelings to be thus honoured by such a man, while his acquaintance is courted by all the noble in the land.

In another letter, dated March 30, 1817, Bewick was equally enthusiastic about his master. Again Haydon had lent him money, this time five shillings out of the last £5 he possessed. Moreover, he had



encouraged Bewick to strive hard at the Academy and to let it be known that Haydon was his sponsor.

"Tell the Professor," says he, "plumply, if he speaks to you, that you are a pupil of mine, I want it to be known." What must I feel, John, when Mr. Haydon rejects so many young men who come to him with letters of recommendation, and who have offered him large sums of money—one young man came recommended from Edinburgh. Mr. Haydon (as he says) soon found out what he was, and recommended him to begin immediately with portraits.

In the same letter, Bewick mentioned another incident not without significance: "He likewise offered to pass his word for the payment of a quarter-year's living at an eating-house" (probably John O'Groat's); but Bewick, wise beyond his years and Haydon's example, declined. "It seems much better," he continued, "to pay as I go on, as I should not like at the end of three months not to be able to pay."

William Harvey, another pupil, whom Haydon mentioned in his account of the meeting with Bewick, became a wood engraver of note. His engraving of *Dentatus* was greatly admired for its size and quality. Edward Chatfield was less successful. He tried history and portraiture but seems never to have realized his talents, dying in 1839 at the age of 36. George Lance, who became a pupil somewhat later, was known chiefly for his fruit and still-life painting. There were a number of others who studied under Haydon whose names are now forgotten: John Borrow (brother of George), Tatham, Webb (who became a "butterman" and helped Haydon later on), Say, Robertson, Major, Jones, and Prentis (or Prentice). Maclise and Cope have also been mentioned as pupils of Haydon's but almost certainly were not.

Haydon's efforts in behalf of his pupils were energetic, untiring, and, on the whole, unselfish. He sometimes claimed that he charged them no fees. With certain of them—as, for example, Bewick—this may have been true, but it is apparent from a note in the journals and a letter from Haydon to a prospective student in 1845 that an apprentice premium of 200 guineas was sometimes charged.<sup>11</sup>

The course he put them through was exacting and must have been

<sup>11</sup>This was by no means exorbitant. In 1833 Landseer charged his pupils a fee of £500.

a considerable drain upon his energies. Vanity, no doubt, gave impetus to his labors, the gratification of having a group of earnest disciples; but it would be unjust not to recognize that back of all this was a sincere desire to elevate English taste and advance the technical standards of English art. As Bewick's comment on the caricature shows, Haydon was always eager to bring his pupils before the public. His methods of achieving notoriety were not always dignified, but in certain instances, at least, they were effective.<sup>12</sup> He had no objection to his pupils attending the Academy schools, and a number of them did so.

But association with Haydon was not of unmixed benefit, and his pupils found that they were not exempt from the effects of his quarrels with the connoisseurs and with the Academy. Far more serious for Haydon's reputation and for his school was the involvement of Bewick and Harvey in their master's financial ruin in 1823, a disaster which brought to an abrupt end his ambition to establish a band of disciples and followers.<sup>13</sup>

The ultimate results of Haydon's teaching are, of course, impossible to evaluate. His immediate purpose of founding a new school of English Historical Art was a failure; but his technique of instruction, his insistence upon the mastery of painting as a craft was probably wholesome. He left no body of artists to follow out his ideas; he established no guild or brotherhood; and the results of his teaching are imponderable, hence without recognition or regard.

Early in 1820 he completed his gigantic picture of *Christ's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem*. He leased the Great Room at Bullock's Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly for an entire year for £300,

<sup>12</sup> Haydon claimed to have been responsible for bringing Edwin Landseer's drawings to the attention of Sir George Beaumont and to have furthered a connection between the two which was of great benefit to the young painter. About 1820, when Lord John Leicester de Tabley offered Haydon 60 guineas for a small picture, he turned the commission over to Bewick.

<sup>13</sup> About 1821, in a moment of more than usually great financial stress, Haydon persuaded these two pupils to sign accommodation bills to get time extended for money he already owed. In 1823, on Haydon's first imprisonment for debt, Bewick and Harvey found themselves liable. Bewick, who could by no means pay the sum required, left London to avoid arrest. Haydon later blamed himself severely for thus involving his pupils.

and opened the exhibition there with a private day on March 25.<sup>14</sup>

*Jerusalem* had been rubbed in in May 1814, just before his departure for France with Wilkie. During the long period of its painting, Haydon was frequently busy with his other affairs, but notices in the public prints kept the general interest whetted. Elmes maintained a continual series of puffs and communiques, but in the one published in 1818 the *Annals* outdid even itself in arrogance and bad taste.

As Haydon's picture is beginning to get to a conclusion, hints are thrown out,—what an excellent place he would get, *if* he would only send it to the Academy, for their ensuing exhibition; and how certain he would be of being elected, *if* he would only put down his name; and how very foolish he is to think of doing good to the art, by remaining out: insinuations are given him, through the intervention of mutual friends, of how much good he would do with *his great talents*, if he would *only* get in. Now, do these volunteer advisers imagine, that he really is so weak, as to have his vanity tickled, his reason dulled, and "his great talents" caught by such shallow baits, and that he does not see the point of the hook puncturing the skin of the little worm that is curling on it? or, do they suppose, that after creating an epoch in English art, by sending forth pupils from his school, the first that were ever deeply educated in this country; that he will melt down the vigour of his native ore in their crucible of imbecility? . . . No, no: he got all his fame and reputation, which is now extended all over Europe, by remaining out, and we hope he will always remain so. He is not so weak, as to have his peace shattered, and his plans deranged, with the contracted notions of bustling and narrow minds.

But the work dragged on through 1819, until at last even Wordsworth was moved to suggest to Haydon that if he should ever adopt a nickname, after the manner of the earlier painters, it ought to be "Tenyears," for, the poet was careful to explain, "You have been ten years about this work." But he later admitted to the painter's son that "it was worth waiting fifty years to get so complete a work." When word finally came that it was finished, John Scott's new venture, the *London Magazine*, spoke of the "very high degree of expectation . . . excited by this announcement, in the breasts of all

<sup>14</sup>During the latter months of the exhibition, the *Radeau de la Méduse* of Géricault, leader of the new realistic school in France, was shown in an adjoining room in the Egyptian Hall. Although at the time it caused less stir than *Jerusalem*, it was destined to have a much longer life in the history of art. In many ways it represented the new dispensation, Haydon's painting, the old.

judges and admirers of the noble art, in the practice of which Mr. Haydon is already so distinguished."

Haydon's difficulties during the progress of the picture had been considerable, but they were of the sort he gloried in. His expenses had been excessive, and as usual he seems to have made no real efforts toward economy. Bewick, who was very close to him during the painting of *Jerusalem*, told Wilkie in 1824 that Haydon "would pay exorbitant sums for some of the models for his heads. For instance, the Jews screwed out of him what-ever they demanded; and even then he was obliged to cover up the figure of Christ, otherwise they refused to sit to him at any price. He would pick up a beggar in the street, and for fear of losing him would bring him home in a coach. Of course his own man, Salmon [Sammons], sat for the figure; then there were draperies, armour, &c. The female figures—hands, feet, and so forth—all costly, for he did not paint without both drawing and studying every part of his picture first. Every nostril, every finger-nail, will be found to be a complete study."

Not all the sitters, however, were paid. In keeping with ancient practice and following, no doubt, the example of Fuseli, Haydon introduced a number of his friends and acquaintances into the picture. Wordsworth sat for his head on December 22, 1817; Hazlitt some eight months earlier. During Hazlitt's sitting, Haydon, who had hopes of enlisting the critic's pen in the cause of High Art, remonstrated with him because of his despair over the outlook for modern painting. But Hazlitt remained unconverted: "The success of painting," Haydon remarked, "is to Hazlitt a sore affair after his failure."

A "Key" to the painting, now in the Boston Public Library, which was probably prepared by the painter for the American exhibition of *Jerusalem* in 1832, assists in identifying Wordsworth, Keats, Sharp,<sup>15</sup> and Hazlitt. An incident related by Leslie further

<sup>15</sup> William Sharp (1749-1824) was a capable though somewhat eccentric engraver. As a young man, he was an outspoken republican, but his later delusions took a religious form. Haydon and he were evidently on friendly terms for a time, for in 1817 the painter exhibited "A drawing in chalk of the venerable graphic patriarch Mr. Sharp; possessing vigour, truth and science, in a very high degree." The whimsical disposition of Sharp's portrait in *Jerusalem* (only one eye shows) is prototypal of Haydon's treatment of Alderman Cowan in *The Reform Banquet* (1834): "[As he had] offended me, I put in the back of his head."

aids in identifying the St. John of the painting. John Howard Payne one day called upon Haydon. He had come to London in 1813, after considerable success in America as an actor, but he had failed to impress London audiences. He complained to the painter of the jealousy of English actors and the illiberality of the English press. Haydon, who was keenly interested in the theater and in actors, is said to have replied: "Sir, I regret from my soul the treatment you have met with; I regret it as an Englishman, and am ashamed of my country. I wish it were in my power to do anything that could make you the slightest amends; but the only way in which I can show my sense of the injustice you have suffered, is to make you the St. John in my picture."

The effectiveness of two of the heads has been vouched for. Hazlitt described the Wordsworth portrait as "the most like his drooping weight of thought and expression." And Amy Lowell admits that the head of Keats, for all its faults, does "give a fire, and life, and verve to be found nowhere else."

Haydon's description of his last minute difficulties and borrowings, of his fears and ultimate triumph is a familiar passage in the latter pages of the *Autobiography*. The private day was a complete and overwhelming success. Haydon, using a Court Guide, had issued eight hundred tickets, and the aristocracy, artistic as well as economic, flocked to the Egyptian Hall. Mrs. Siddons, who had made her last appearance on the stage less than a year earlier but was still vastly respected as the greatest English tragic actress, did Haydon a good turn by approving the head of the Christ. "It is completely successful," she announced, in a deep, loud, tragic tone. . . . "The paleness . . . gives it a supernatural look."

When the exhibition was open to the public on the Monday following, most people seemed ready to accept her judgment. The painter, however, had serious doubts which he expressed to Miss Mitford and noted in his *Autobiography*.

There may have been uncertainty regarding the success of the Christ, but on one topic all were agreed. The ass upon which Christ was riding was indisputably fine, so fine, in fact, that it distracted attention from the other figures. One wit (either Northcote or Rogers) remarked, "Mr. Haydon, your ass is the saviour of your

picture." Thirty-four years later, one writer went so far as to ascribe the painting of the creature to Edwin Landseer, Haydon's pupil. As a late contribution to the criticism of the picture, *Fraser's Magazine* remarked that "the only part of the picture decently executed was the jackass; and since that great success Mr. Haydon has been universally known in the profession as the Jackass Painter."

The general contemporary reaction to *Jerusalem*, however, was favorable. It had a good press—especially in the Hunts' *Examiner* and John Scott's *London Magazine*. But Scott, while he admired the painting, deplored the necessity of the "public exhibition, at a shilling a head," and criticized severely Haydon's descriptive catalogue, a puffing advertisement, retailed for sixpence at the exhibition. Other reviewers were in the main favorable, although some of them did not care much for the head of the Christ.

Among the artists, the picture was well received. John Landseer defended *Jerusalem* and its painter in the *Examiner*. C. R. Leslie, while he felt it inferior to *Solomon*, still found "some very fine things in it." Washington Allston, the American, was delighted. In 1811, with Leslie and S. F. B. Morse, he had studied the Elgin Marbles in their temporary home in the garden of Burlington House, and subsequently the three had spent many pleasant evenings at Haydon's while the painting was in progress. At the exhibition, "His eye beamed, his whole face lighted up, and he looked as though he had received pure delight." Nor had his opinion changed in 1833 when he wrote an American critic who had praised the painting:

The "Entrance into Jerusalem" is indeed a magnificent work of art. Where the excellence is of so high an order, and the beauties so numerous, I should think myself but poorly employed were I disposed to dwell on its faults. I could overlook them all for the sake of its merits. 'Tis a glorious picture!

Haydon's literary friends had also been favorably impressed. Keats and Hazlitt were present on the Saturday of the private view and stood in a corner, Haydon said, "really rejoicing." In April, Sir Walter Scott, still unidentified as the mysterious "Author of 'Waverly,'" came to town; and through the good offices of Daniel

Terry, the actor,<sup>16</sup> Haydon was invited to meet him at the home of Atkinson, the architect of Abbotsford. He dined there on the 30th. Sir Walter, who afterwards befriended Haydon, visited the exhibition early the following morning. According to the painter, both he and Wordsworth approved of the Christ. Hazlitt, however, did not; and in his faint praise of the picture in the *Edinburgh Review* for August 1820, he, like John Scott, condemned the descriptive catalogue as an unworthy device which "deceives the artist, and may mislead the public."

Charles Lamb, however, who, Crabb Robinson said, had a "relish for historical painting" which was "exquisite," was more wholehearted. In the *Champion* for May 13, 14 was published a set of Latin verses "In Tabulam Eximii Pictoris B. Haydoni" signed "Carlagnulus" together with the following translation:

What rider's that? and who those myriads bringing  
Him on his way with palms, Hosannas singing?  
Hosanna to the Christ, Heaven—Earth—should  
still be ringing.

In days of old, old Palma won renown:  
But Palma's self must yield the painter's crown,  
Haydon, to thee. Thy palms put every other down.

If Flaccus' sentence with the truth agree,  
That "palms awarded make men plump to be,"  
Friend Horace, Haydon soon in bulk shall match  
with thee.

Painters with poets for the laurel vie:  
But should the laureate band thy claims deny,  
Wear thou thine own green palm, Haydon,  
triumphantly.

Charles Lamb.

The exhibition was a financial success. Haydon reckoned his receipts at £1547, 8s. In other words, 30,948 persons paid a shilling each to see the picture. Some 8,519 sixpenny catalogues brought in an additional £212, 19s., 6d. The net profits came to £1298, 2s., but the painter's debts were already more than enough to swallow up that amount.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel Terry (1780?-1829) was the author of the unpublished "Lines addressed to Haydon" which are included in an appendix.

But while people were not averse to paying their shillings to view the artistic sensation of the year, no one seemed anxious to buy it. Sir George Beaumont urged the British Institution to purchase the painting, but the directors refused, perhaps because of the opposition of Payne Knight. Lord Ashburnham gave Haydon a present of £100 but could hold out no hopes for a sale. Beaumont and Sir George Phillips started a subscription list to buy the painting for presentation to a church, but they unwisely limited the subscriptions to ten guineas each, and the plan fell through after £200 had been paid into Coutts'.<sup>17</sup>

Not discouraged by his failure to sell the picture, and heartened by the success of the exhibition, he decided to take *Jerusalem* to Scotland and show it there. After calling on Mrs. Siddons to express his gratitude and admiration, he collected what resources he could and set out for Edinburgh.

It was a bold venture. The Scottish capital was the hunting ground of the notorious "Scotch Reviewers." One of them, Lord Brougham, had pilloried the youthful poems of Lord Byron in the *Edinburgh Review* for January 1808. Another, in the tradition, had written the infamous "Z" attacks "On the Cockney School of Poetry" in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* during 1817-1819. If these articles did not, as some sentimentalists chose to believe, harry John Keats to an early grave, they had at least heaped strangely venomous scorn on Leigh Hunt and his friends, the "set of people" Haydon later complained to Sir Walter Scott about being "mingled up with."

"Z," the author of these articles, has never been positively identified, but there is good reason to believe that he was John Gibson Lockhart, who shortly afterwards became Sir Walter's son-in-law. In *Blackwood's* for October 1817, "Z" had opened his series with some notice of what he chose to consider Hunt's vulgarity, immorality, and general depravity, especially as exemplified in *The Story of Rimini*, (the poem which Haydon had admired so excessively) :

How could any man of high original genius ever stoop publically, at the present day, to dip his fingers in the least of those glittering and rancid

<sup>17</sup>In June 1820, Wordsworth was proposing to Monkhouse and Crabb Robinson a plan "to have a large sum raised to enable Haydon to continue in his profession." But nothing came of that either.



obscurities which float on the surface of Mr. Hunt's Hippocrene? His poetry is that of a man who has kept company with kept-mistresses. He talks indelicacy like a tea-sipping milliner girl. . . . The very concubine of so impure a wretch as Leigh Hunt would be to be pitied, but alas! for the wife of such a husband! For him there is no charm in simple seduction; and he gloats over it only when accompanied with adultery and incest. . . .

A second attack appeared in the November number, to which Hunt replied in the *Examiner* for November 16, asking the cowardly and brutal "Z" to identify himself in order that a libel suit might be instituted. But "Z" would not allow himself to be flushed, and continued his attacks in the July and August numbers for 1818 and in April and October 1819. The first three articles were aimed directly at Hunt; the fourth applied the same brutal technique to a criticism of Keats and his *Endymion*.

Haydon did not entirely escape in the general condemnation of Hunt's friends. In the fourth article of the series, he received particular mention:

The absurdity of the thought in this sonnet [Keat's "Written on the Day That Mr. Leigh Hunt Left Prison"] is, however, if possible, surpassed in another, "*addressed to Haydon*" the painter, that clever, but most affected artist, who as little resembles Raphael in genius as he does in person, notwithstanding the foppery of having his hair curled over his shoulders in the old Italian fashion.

The defense of Hunt and his friends was undertaken both by Hunt himself in the columns of the *Examiner* and by John Scott, editor of the *London Magazine*. In a reply to *Blackwood's*, entitled "The Mohock Magazine," Scott refuted the charge that Haydon was a "greasy-pate": "It is a hoax to astonish a gentleman of clean and rather careful habits, by exclaiming that his *hair* is *greasy*, though it bears the appearance of holding pomatum in horror: this Blackwood's men have done to Mr. Haydon . . . and protest solemnly that they have . . . 'never seen one of their [the Cockneys'] *faces*!' "

Haydon might well, then, have approached Edinburgh with some trepidation; but as things worked out he need have had no fears. His visit was an unqualified triumph. The exhibition at the capital took in some £500, and a further showing at Glasgow grossed £400 more.

But the greatest victory by far was Haydon's conquest of the

reviewers—the literary clique of *Blackwood's*. He met them all—and won their respect, he said, as a sound Tory and no Cockney: Sir Walter Scott, Jeffrey, Lockhart, Croker, and Wilson, as well as many of the lesser lights of Scottish literature and art. In the November number, *Blackwood's*, and presumably Lockhart and Wilson who directed its editorial policies, retracted handsomely:

It is probable that the absurd style of language in which the picture has been lauded by the critics of Cockaigne, may have inspired many of our readers (as we confess it had ourselves), with many doubts and suspicions; but, in order to do away with these, we are quite sure, nothing more can be necessary than a single glance at this wonderful performance itself. . . . It is quite evident, that Mr. Haydon is already by far the greatest historical painter that England has yet produced. *In time*, those that have observed this masterpiece, can have no doubt he may take his place by the side of the very greatest painters of Italy.

And in the February number of the following year, *Blackwood's* published a laudatory "Sonnet to Haydon" by David Macbeth Moir, one of its regular contributors.

Just what changed the Scotch Reviewers' attitude toward Haydon is difficult to say. The painter claimed that it was his fine riding of a spirited horse that won over his Scottish acquaintances. Perhaps that was it. Or perhaps the merits of *Jerusalem* were really what the writer in *Blackwood's* had said. Perhaps Sir Walter, who did not approve of *Blackwood's* savagery, had interceded for him; or Haydon's own bonhomie and air of high conviction had placated his critics. In any event, the visit to Scotland was a financial and moral triumph, and he returned to London more than ever convinced of his destiny.<sup>18</sup>

The subsequent history of *Christ's Entry into Jerusalem* is of some interest. It remained on Haydon's hands until 1823 when, after his release from King's Bench Prison, he was forced to dispose of it for £240. Its purchaser, who bought it on speculation, kept it for the most part in a warehouse, but exhibited it twice (in 1824

<sup>18</sup>The "Memoir of Mr. Haydon," which appeared in the *European Magazine* for November 1824, states that *Jerusalem* was subsequently exhibited in Dublin—with a resultant loss of £80—and that a second exhibition at Edinburgh was attempted. This information seems at best doubtful, although it is evident that the writer of the "Memoir" derived many of his details directly from Haydon.

and 1829) with indifferent success. In September 1831, it was purchased by two Americans, Cephas Childs, the engraver, and Henry Inman, the portrait painter, to form the nucleus of the American Gallery of Painting, a building in Philadelphia of which Haydon's cousin, John Haviland, had been the architect. Haydon saw the painting before it was exported, and wrote in his journal:

. . . I trust in God it will be preserved from fire and ruin, and as it was a work painted with the most fervent prayers to Him . . . for health and strength to go through it, that He will be pleased to grant that it may cross the seas in safety, and do that good in America it has failed to do here. . . . God bless it, and the result of its mission. What a disgrace to the aristocracy!

In Philadelphia the picture was exhibited at the Gallery until 1846 when, during a bad fire, it was cut from its frame and "dragged from the building like a wet blanket." Later it was shown at the Franklin Academy, and in time it came into the possession of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cincinnati, who had it hung for some years in the Cathedral there. It is now at Mount Saint Mary's Seminary of the West, Norwood, Ohio. The reproduction in this book was made from the painting in its present state, after its restoration in 1941 by members of the Cincinnati Art Museum.

• SIX •

[illegible]

When Keats was introduced to Haydon, late in 1816, he had just . . . 114

passed his twenty-first birthday. Behind him were his school days and his three years' apprenticeship to Thomas Hammond, Surgeon, from whom he had parted in 1812. Already he had relinquished the idea of becoming a physician. His thoughts had turned toward poetry, but the prospects for a literary career were vague and unpromising.

John Keats was small of stature, but he had shown himself to be manly and pugnacious. His face was dark, sensitive, and eager, with a glowing eye, and an intensity which marked a vivid if somewhat nervous temperament. Since boyhood his closest friend had been Charles Cowden Clarke, the son of his schoolmaster at Enfield. Through Clarke, himself a young man of literary tastes, Keats was already much "travell'd in the realms of gold," and through him he had come to know the riches of Spenser and Shakespeare, Virgil and Homer. Clarke knew a number of the artists and literary men of his day: he was acquainted with Haydon and was a follower and admirer of Leigh Hunt in his political and literary activities.

Clarke was genuinely fond of Keats, and since his friend had turned toward poetry as a career, Clarke set out to make him known to his two most influential acquaintances in the world of art and letters. He had already talked to Hunt of Keats and had shown him a number of Keats's poems. Hunt was favorably impressed and accepted the sonnet on "Solitude" for publication in the *Examiner* for May 5. On the strength of this and the other poems which Clarke had shown him, Hunt was exceedingly warm in praising Keats in an article "Young Poets" which appeared in the *Examiner* for December 1. The time was ripe for an introduction, and on the Sunday the article appeared, Clarke took his friend to Hunt's cottage in the Vale of Health, Hampstead.<sup>1</sup> Leigh Hunt could be extremely charming on such occasions. He made Clarke and his friend warmly welcome, and the three men spent a happy evening together, talking poetry and liberalism and no doubt examining Hunt's collection of locks of hair from the heads of eminent persons. Hunt and Clarke remembered that happy evening many years later;

<sup>1</sup>There is some evidence which points to an introduction earlier in the year. I have accepted the conclusion of Edmund Blunden, the most recent biographer of Leigh Hunt, on this point.

Keats, to whom it was a red-letter day indeed, celebrated it immediately with the sonnet, "Keen, fitful gusts are whisp'ring here and there," which concluded:

For I am brimfull of the friendliness  
That in a little cottage I have found;  
Of fair-hair'd Milton's eloquent distress,  
And all his love for gentle Lycid drown'd;  
Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,  
And faithful Petrarch gloriously crown'd.

Hunt responded with characteristic flourish in a sonnet which might serve to illustrate the distinction between the talent of the older poet and the genius of the younger.

'Tis well you think me one of those,  
Whose sense discerns the loveliness of things;  
For surely as I feel the bird that sings  
Behind the leaves, or dawn as up it grows,  
Or the rich bee rejoicing as he goes,  
Or the glad issue of emerging springs,  
Or over head the glide of a dove's wings,  
Or turf, or trees, or, midst of all, repose:

And surely as I look, and the harmonious form  
Containing woman, and the smile in ill,  
And such a heart as Charles's, wise and warm,—  
As surely as all this, I see, ev'n now,  
Young Keats, a flowering laurel on your brow.

Once the acquaintance was made, Keats became a favorite member of the Hunt circle.

Leigh Hunt, then a man of thirty-two, was, for all his youth, a person of wide experience and influence. His martyrdom—the two years he had spent in Surrey Gaol for telling the cruel truth about the Prince Regent—had marked him as one of the great champions of liberalism, and he had become the acknowledged leader of a new school of young men who dabbled in radical ideas, poetical and otherwise. From among these disciples he had chosen as his intimates a few whose genius he hoped to direct and whose fortunes to advance. Hunt, who always looked younger than he really was, had a striking and poetical appearance and a manner which was

cordial but somewhat lackadaisical. Tall and thin, he cultivated a dandified and not ungraceful slouch. His hair was long, thick, and black; his face was dark and handsome with delicate, almost feminine features: a small straight nose, a sensitive mouth, and soft black eyes. As an editor of experience and a successful poet, Hunt was a man whose guidance and encouragement were sought by eager and youthful writers. It is to be feared that his influence upon his young poets was not altogether wholesome. He was kind, helpful, and loyal; but his poetry was not of the first order, and his taste, on which he prided himself, was not discriminating enough to be of much use in the moulding of younger men. His diction, too, had a vulgar prettiness and lusciousness about it—"Cockney" characteristics which too often found their way into the poetry of his disciples.

The activities of Hunt's little circle of friends were mildly convivial and sentimental. Shelley and John Hamilton Reynolds, both of whom Hunt had bracketed with Keats in "Young Poets," were, with Keats and Hunt himself, the chief poetic members of the group. Friendly bouts at sonneteering were held, usually at Hunt's "little cottage," the contestants contorting their muses to fit a given subject like "The Grasshopper and the Cricket" or "The Nile." Sometimes young ladies of poetic tastes were included in their affairs, and on occasions of particular felicity laurel or ivy wreaths were placed on not reluctant brows. Even such events were not allowed to pass unrecorded, and Keats's posthumous and fugitive poems include sonnets "To a Young Lady who sent me a Laurel Crown," "On Receiving a Laurel Crown from Leigh Hunt," and "To the Ladies who saw me Crown'd."

The sonnet, in fact, was to the younger romantic poets an all too facile instrument. The young men whom Leigh Hunt shepherded had for it a particular fondness, and their leader encouraged them to use the form as a vehicle for all sorts of emotions and fancies. The sonnet of greeting or of eulogy was most popular, lines "Addressed to ——" or "On reading ——." When, for example, Reynolds read Hunt's praise of him in "Young Poets," he responded almost automatically with a sonnet on Hunt's verse tale *Rimini*. He sent his lines beginning "Ye who do love to hear of

mossy places" to Hunt, whom at that time he had not met; and Hunt, never to be outdone in such matters, replied with the following effusion:

Reynolds, whose Muse, from out thy gentle embraces,  
 Holding a little crisp and dewy flower,  
 Came to me in my close-entwined bower,  
 Where many fine-eyed Friendships and glad Graces,  
 Parting the boughs, have looked in with like faces,  
 And thanked the song which had sufficient power  
 With Phoebus to bring back a warmer hour,  
 And turn his southern eye to our green places:

Not for this only, but that thou dost long  
 For all men's welfare, may there be a throng  
 Of kind regards, wherever thou appearest;  
 And in the home, firm-handed Health, a song  
 Girt with rich-hearted friends, and she the nearest  
 To whom the warble of thy lip is dearest.

And shortly, Reynolds too was added to the Hunt circle.

Earlier in the year, Reynolds had met Haydon, probably through John Scott, a mutual friend. Soon afterwards he published his first poem of any consequence, *The Naiad*, dedicated "To Benjamin Robert Haydon, Esq. . . . by one who admires his genius, and values his friendship." About the same time he composed a "Sonnet to Haydon" which more than surpassed the conventional eulogistic enthusiasm:

Haydon! Thou'rt born to Immortality!  
 I look full on;—and Fame's eternal star  
 Shines out o'er ages which are yet afar:  
 It hangs in all its radiance over thee!  
 I watch whole nations o'er thy works sublime  
 Bending;—and breathing—while their spirits glow—  
 Thy name with that of the stern Angelo,  
 Whole giant genius braves the hate of Time!  
 But not alone in agony and strife  
 Art thou majestic;—Thy fancies bring  
 Sweets from the sweet; the loveliness of life  
 Melts from thy pencil, like the breath of Spring.  
 Soul is within thee;—Honours wait without thee:—  
 The wings of Raphael's Spirit play about thee!



Later, Hunt himself, who had known Haydon for almost ten years, addressed a similar sonnet to the painter, an effusion of congratulation and blessing which stirred Haydon's heart:

Haydon, whom now the conquered toil confesses  
 Painter indeed, gifted, laborious, true,  
 Fit to be numbered in succession due  
 With Michael, whose idea austere presses,  
 And sweet-souled Raphael with his amorous tresses;  
 Well has thou urged thy radiant passage through  
 A host of clouds; and he who with thee grew  
 The bard and friend, congratulates and blesses.

'Tis glorious thus to have one's own proud will,  
 And see the crown acknowledged that we earn;  
 But nobler yet, and nearer to the skies,  
 To feel one's-self, in hours serene and still,  
 One of the spirits chosen by heaven to turn  
 The sunny side of things to human eyes.

Haydon, easily thrilled by poetic tributes, composed a reply the following day. His letter, dated September 4, 1816, which is now in the British Museum, shows many signs of haste or emotion. "My dear Hunt," he wrote:

Thy sonnet is very, very fine—God grant I may deserve it—of course I must have my favourite lines—

"Well has thou urged thy radiant passage through a  
 host of clouds: and he who with thee grew the Bard &  
 Friend congratulates and blesses—

This to my feeling is full of inspired energy & pathos—it affected my imagination & my heart—

'Tis glorious thus to have one's proud will—

It is, It is

And *see* the crown *acknowledged* that we earn

It is

But nobler yet and nearer to the skies  
 to feel one's self in hours *serene & still*  
 One of the Spirits chosen by Heav'n to turn  
 the sunny side of things to human eyes—

Nothing can be finer—and all the troubles & torments of this earth, cannot give one pain as severe as the pleasure is rapturous of sitting quietly your body exhausted with a day's labour, & your soul beaming with the feeling of holding intercourse with distant ages—the first part is worthy the second,

the whole worthy you as the Poet and may I be worthy of it as the Painter—

Adieu—I'll defy all troubles for Well has thou urged & will blow them to shatters—

Yours ever & ever my dear

Hunt

B. R. Haydon

It urges me on with fire—I must stay till we meet to  
tell you all Ill be with you Sunday early—

And on the reverse of the sheet, Haydon tried his hand at versifying with the following lamentable result:

Thy Sonnet Bard & Friend in truth I read  
To the last moment of my going to bed,  
And when at length the candle was put out  
Long to myself thy sonnet did I shout,  
And still in sleeping on thy sonnet dreamt  
And when before I well knew what I meant  
Thy sonnet mutter'd!—(Trust in what I say)  
At the first dawning of the creeping day  
When Lads and Lasses 'gin to rake their hay,  
And Lovers drop and doze, after long amorous play.

But verse making was by no means the only activity of the group. At times a select circle of Hunt's friends met around his dinner table to commemorate events of sentimental importance. One such meeting Mary Russell Mitford heard about from "a great admirer of Mr. Haydon's and a friend of Leigh Hunt's." The story was, she felt, too good to keep; and she communicated it to Sir William Elford, the recipient of many of her most intimate letters. Sir William, a Devon man, and himself an amateur artist, knew Haydon, of course, had, in fact, been one of the purchasers of *The Judgment of Solomon* in 1814.

Leigh Hunt (not the notorious Mr. Henry Hunt, but the fop, poet, and politician of the "Examiner") is a great keeper of birthdays. He was celebrating that of Haydn, the great composer—giving a dinner, crowning his bust with laurels, berhyming the poor dead German, and conducting an apotheosis in full form. Somebody told Mr. Haydon that they were celebrating *his* birthday. So off he trotted to Hampstead, and bolted in to the company—made a very fine, animated speech—thanked them most sincerely for the honor they had done him and the art in his person. But they had made a little mistake in the day. His birthday, etc., etc., etc.

Now this bonhomie is a little ridiculous, but a thousand times preferable to the wicked wit of which the poor artist was the dupe. Did you ever hear this story?

Not all the meetings of the group were so innocent. The liberty which Hunt and his friends advocated was religious as well as political, a liberty which found expression in their conversation and, less freely, in their poetry. Like most "enlightened" men of the period, they were deists—or freethinkers—and Haydon, a militant and orthodox Christian, soon found himself baited on every side. His bout with Shelley, on first meeting him at Horace Smith's table, is one of the most characteristic and amusing passages in the *Autobiography*. Shelley, a "hectic, spare, weakly yet intellectual-looking creature" who was "carving a bit of broccoli or cabbage on his plate, as if it had been the substantial wing of a chicken," opened the conversation with a remark on "that detestable religion, the Christian." Haydon looked his astonishment, but a glance around the table told him that he was to be a solitary champion. "I felt exactly like a stag at bay and resolved to gore without mercy." The argument was reserved, however, until after the desert; then it began, "neither of us," the painter said, "using an atom of logic." The immediate dispute concerned the religion of Shakespeare, Shelley claiming that he could not have been a Christian and have written the dialogue between Posthumus and the Gaoler in Act V, Scene iv of *Cymbeline*. Haydon, who knew his Shakespeare, was able to match quotation for quotation, until the remarks on both sides became personal, and the party broke up. Keats, Hunt, his wife and her sister, and Horace Smith were present. As they were preparing to leave, one of them—presumably Smith, who was a timid man—asked Haydon nervously, "'Are these creatures to be d——d, Haydon?' 'Good Heaven,' the painter replied, 'what a morbid view of Christianity.'" Miss Mitford, again in a letter to Sir William Elford, reported a similar incident of Haydon at bay among "some of the cleverest unbelievers of the age," including Leigh Hunt. These meetings, of course, occurred after Haydon and Keats had met. Their significance in the relations between these two men and Leigh Hunt will presently appear.

Keats had been introduced to Haydon at his painting room about

two weeks before his introduction to Hunt. This meeting had also been arranged by Charles Cowden Clarke, he of the "wise and warm" heart. Keats's first response to "this glorious Haydon and all his creation" was an enthusiastic sonnet which he sent at once to his new hero.

Great spirits now on earth are sojourning;  
 He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,  
 Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide awake,  
 Catches his freshness from Archangel's wing:  
 He of the rose, the violet, the spring,  
 The social smile, the chain for Freedom's sake:  
 And lo!—whose stedfastness would never take  
 A meaner sound than Raphael's whispering.  
 And other spirits there are standing apart  
 Upon the forehead of the age to come;  
 These, these will give the world another heart,  
 And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum  
 Of mighty workings in some distant mart?  
 Listen awhile ye nations, and be dumb.

By no means surfeited with the adulation of poets, Haydon replied in a cordial letter which Keats resolved to keep by him "as a stimulus to exertion." Haydon also suggested the elision of the phrase "in some distant mart" which Keats accepted and "gloried in." The painter offered to show the poem to Wordsworth, the first person of Keats's trinity, an idea which put the reverent Keats "out of breath."

The friendship of Haydon, Hunt, and Keats was not to continue long, but at the beginning of 1817 it was at the flood. In the "friendliness" of Hunt's "little cottage" and in the painting room of "glorious Haydon" Keats found ready inspiration and encouragement for the poetic ambitions which had already enticed him from his medical studies.

Keats's intimacy with the painter was of rapid growth. During the winter of 1816 and the spring that followed, he was a constant visitor at Haydon's studio. Early in their acquaintance Haydon made the familiar life mask of Keats, with a technique already perfected by his mouldings of Wordsworth and Wilkie. There was much eager talk during these visits. Haydon was thirty-one, Keats ten years his junior; both were young and passionately intense in

their love for beauty. Keats's clear intelligence must early have perceived the shallow facility of Hunt's taste, in contrast to the high and earnest seriousness of Haydon's. "In these early days," as Miss Lowell says, "Keats was very much [an evident disciple] to Haydon. He swallowed Haydon's theories, he listened to Haydon's ideas, he talked Haydon's talk, and Haydon was wise enough to know that here was a young man whom it was well worth while to ignore."

Early in March appeared the first of Keats's published volumes, the *Poems* of 1817. Leigh Hunt, to whose encouragement Keats owed so much, reviewed the collection in his *Examiner*, praising it at length. Haydon also tried his hand at literary criticism, his review appearing in the *Champion* for March 9, 1817. He concluded his article, probably the first review of Keats's book to be published, with a bit of self-advertisement which is less offensive when one remembers that the painter was a man of established reputation and that Keats was virtually unknown. "We have had two sonnets presented to us, which were written by Mr. Keats, and which are not printed in the present volume. We have great pleasure in giving them to the public,—as well on account of their own power and beauty, as of the grandeur of the subjects; on which we have ourselves so often made observations." The two sonnets which Haydon reproduced were the familiar "To Haydon, with a sonnet written on seeing the Elgin Marbles" and "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles," which he had received only a few days before. His letter to Keats acknowledging these sonnets shows the deficiencies of Haydon's poetic taste and the genuineness of his affection and respect for Keats:

My dear Keats,

March [3rd], 1817.

Many thanks, my dear fellow, for your two noble sonnets. I know not a finer image than the comparison of a poet unable to express his high feelings to a sick eagle looking at the sky, where he must have remembered his former towerings amid the blaze of dazzling sunbeams, in the pure expanse of glittering clouds; now and then passing angels, on heavenly errands lying at the will of the wind with moveless wings, or pitching downward with a fiery rush, eager and intent on objects of their seeking. You filled me with fury for an hour, and with admiration for ever.

God bless you!

B. R. Haydon

P.S. I shall expect you and Clarke and Reynolds tonight.

My dear Keats,

I have really opened my letter to tell you how deeply I feel the high enthusiastic praise with which you have spoken of me in the first sonnet—be assured you shall never repent it—the time will come if God spare my life—when you will remember it with delight—

Once more God bless you

B. R. Haydon

Haydon in his journal for March 1817 made further reference to his affection for Keats:

Keats has published his first poems, and great things indeed they promise. . . . Keats is a man after my own heart. He sympathises with me, and comprehends me. We saw through each other at once, and I hope are friends for ever. I only know that, if I sell my picture, Keats shall never want till another is done, that he may have leisure for his effusions; in short, he shall never want all his life while I live.<sup>2</sup>

This third<sup>3</sup> sonnet to Haydon ("Haydon, forgive me that I cannot speak") and the sonnet "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles" were the immediate results of a visit to the British Museum under Haydon's guidance. On this visit, which must have taken place about March 1, the two enthusiasts were probably accompanied by John Hamilton Reynolds. The marbles had an almost overpowering effect upon Keats, and with Haydon as his guide it is little wonder, for he, better perhaps than any man in London, loved them and had mastered their meaning.

Haydon's influence upon Keats during this period was profound. His talk of the grandeur of high art fell upon eager ears. Keats was still impressionable, still emotionally plastic; and it was Haydon's function at that time to direct his young friend's genius toward the most lofty aims. The visit to the Elgin Marbles was one object lesson; another was the presentation of a copy of Goldsmith's *History of Greece* with the inscription in the first volume: "To John Keats, from his ardent friend, B. R. Haydon, 1817."

The determination of the influence of one artist upon another must always be somewhat tentative, even when the artists are work-

<sup>2</sup>"Fine words, Mr. Haydon," is Miss Lowell's aside; "but how did you live up to them? Very badly indeed, as we shall discover."

<sup>3</sup>The first sonnet "Highmindedness, a jealousy for good," which was also "Addressed to Haydon," was, as Miss Lowell points out, probably written before the painter and Keats had met.

ing in the same medium. To demonstrate that a painter has influenced a poet, however, requires an even more cautious approach. Haydon's direct influence upon his literary acquaintances other than Keats was probably very slight. By the time he met Leigh Hunt, Wordsworth, Lamb, and Hazlitt, they had already reached artistic maturity; and while acquaintance with Haydon no doubt broadened their understanding of art, sharpened their criticism, and stimulated their ideas, it is doubtful whether any more definite influence can be discerned. Upon Keats, however, Haydon's character and ideas seem to have had a direct and positive effect. This influence was confined to the development of Keats's conceptions of the quality and functions of art and applied not at all to the particular technical problems of poetry. Not that Haydon was uninterested in poetry. He "gloried in it." His journals were full of his enthusiasms for Shakespeare and Homer. If impetus had been needed for Keats's appreciation of "the realms of gold," Haydon would have been well qualified to supply it. "I have enjoyed Shakespeare more with Keats," he wrote in his journal, "than with any other human creature." But in regard to poetry, Haydon must be considered an enthusiast rather than a critic.

Haydon considered poetry an art of equal merit to his own. His attitude toward both poetry and painting was essentially subjective and romantic. "Painting," he said, is not primarily an imitative art; it "is only the means of exciting poetical and intellectual associations. Poetry and painting require the same minds, the means only are different." To excite such poetical and intellectual associations Haydon, like so many of the romantics, drew largely upon the past. His ideals for art were the "bold," the "masculine," the "grand," and the "powerful." He accepted the dicta of Reynolds and David, that the highest art must concern itself only with the grandest, the most sublime themes. For the great artist, Haydon said, the choice of High Art is inevitable; for there "every hour's progress is an accession of knowledge; the mind never flags, but is kept in one delicious tone of meditation and fancy. . . ."

It would be injudicious to make too much of Haydon's influence upon Keats's poetry. It does not seem unreasonable, however, to suppose that his ideas and example may have determined Keats to

attempt his more "bold," more "grand," and more "powerful" *Endymion*; and one does know that Haydon encouraged him throughout its composition. Keats's genius and temperament were unsuited for the handling of strictly historical or religious themes. He did, however, after the publication of the 1817 *Poems*, turn rather decidedly from the present to the past for his subjects. But a more definite influence which Haydon exerted on Keats's poetry is to be discerned in the growing masculinity of its style. For this, doubtless, there were other causes. Keats was maturing rapidly; he was experiencing deep personal sorrow and the agonies of a hopeless love. But intimacy with Haydon probably hastened the growth. Haydon, like so many men of small stature, was aggressively masculine: determined, combative, and self-assured, with, even, an earlier reputation for swearing. In all this he stood in contrast to Leigh Hunt who prided himself on his refinement and languor and on the preciousness and prettiness of his poetical style. Keats never entirely outgrew the Hunt influence, but for its diminution Haydon is chiefly to be thanked. Art to Haydon was an enormously serious matter, something to be fought for; Hunt's attitude toward it was more dilettante, more feminine. And when Keats came more fully under Haydon's influence, his poetical calling took on a new significance, new dignity, the grand, calm beauty which Haydon had shown him in the Elgin Marbles. *Endymion* and the 1820 poems sound deeper notes and richer harmonies than Leigh Hunt's example could ever have inspired.

Meanwhile Haydon's dissatisfaction with the religious views of Hunt and his friends had become acute. Shelley had been, perhaps, the worst offender, but the religious obliquity of the other members of the group was equally annoying. Haydon, moreover, was concerned about the effect of these subversive ideas upon Keats. Already, in March, in a passionate outpouring of his affections, he had written his fears lest the poet's "ardor might lead [him] to disregard the accumulated wisdom of the ages in moral points." In his letter of May 11, he was more definite in his warnings. "I love you like my own brother," he wrote, after describing the benefits which religion had had for him. "Beware, for God's sake, of the delusions and sophistications that are ripping up the talents and



morality of our friend! He will go out of the world the victim of his own weakness and the dupe of his own self-delusions, with the contempt of his enemies and the sorrow of his friends, and the cause he undertook to support injured by his own neglect of character." Keats's reply cannot entirely have reassured the painter, but at least his growing disaffection for Hunt was an encouraging sign. "His self delusions are very lamentable . . . what you observe thereon is very true. . . . Perhaps it is a self delusion to say so—but I think I could not be deceived in the manner that Hunt is—may I die tomorrow if I am to be. There is no greater sin after the seven deadly than to flatter oneself into the idea of being a great Poet. . . ."

Haydon was steadily winning Keats away from the influence of Hunt and his friendly circle. It was high time. Leigh Hunt had been a loyal friend and advocate, but Keats had already outgrown him. Hunt could offer the pleasures of gay and whimsical companionship, the encouragement of a man of precious taste and ready learning, but Keats no longer needed these. "He of the rose, the violet, the spring, the social smile, the chain for Freedom's sake" was being rapidly and inevitably supplanted by him "whose steadfastness would never take a meaner sound than Raphael's whispering." For "mighty workings" were afoot. *Endymion* had been commenced that spring, and Keats had little inclination for the facile friendliness of the Hunts. "I think you did quite right to leave the Isle of Wight," Haydon had written; "and being quite alone, after study you can now devote yourself your eight hours a-day with just as much seclusion as ever. Do not give way to any forebodings. . . . Every man of great view is, at times, thus tormented. . . . Trust in God with all your might, my dear Keats. This dependence, with your own energy, will give you strength, and hope, and comfort." And Haydon's advice at that moment was excellent.

On Keats's return from his spring vacationing on the Isle of Wight, at Margate, and at Canterbury, he resumed his intimacy with both Hunt and Haydon. No definite break between his two friends had yet occurred, but Haydon continued to warn him against Hunt, advising him particularly not to show Hunt his *Endymion* "on any account or he will have done half for you."

Haydon was making little progress with *Jerusalem*. During the

summer he had moved into his larger quarters in Lisson Grove North: the Hunts moved into the same street shortly afterward. Hunt came frequently to the painting room to inspect the picture and usually managed to find something in it to find fault with. The painter, however, was as active socially as ever, and Keats found interesting company at his studio. There he became acquainted with William Bewick, Haydon's promising pupil, who was just Keats's age, and the two became friends. Bewick was being greatly impressed by the social splendors of his master's painting room where he was "introduced to all kinds of known characters, authors, poets, painters, sculptors, &c., not only of this, but of every country of Europe." Among the frequent visitors to Haydon's about this time were Hazlitt, Clarke, and Reynolds. Charles Lamb dropped in occasionally; Wordsworth, who was forty-seven and already venerable, whenever he came up to London.

Joseph Severn, too, for whom Haydon had but slight regard,<sup>4</sup> became acquainted with the members of the group through his friendship for John Keats. Haydon interested Severn, the latter said in his reminiscences, but he "almost frightened me by his excessive vanity and presumption." It was at Haydon's that Severn met Wordsworth, Hunt, and Reynolds. About this time, according to Severn, Hunt's circle became converted to the vegetarian doctrines of Shelley. Hunt himself was extremely ardent and "most eloquently discussed the charms and advantages of these vegetable banquets, depicting in glowing words the cauliflowers swimming in melted butter, and the peas and beans never profaned with animal gravy." Wordsworth was somewhat sceptical and suggested with mild irony that they might in time come to rejoice at the appearance of a caterpillar in the salad, but most of the group, it would seem, took the matter more seriously. "This absurdity," Severn concluded, "all came to an end by an ugly discovery. Haydon, whose ruddy face had kept the other enthusiasts from sinking under their scanty diet . . . was discovered one day coming out of a chop-house. He was promptly taxed with treachery, when

<sup>4</sup>On August 15, 1842 Haydon wrote to his friend Seymour Kirkup in Rome that "The only thing [Severn] was ever fit for was a wet-nurse to Keats. . . . He is just the man for the aristocracy—men and women. The women treat him as if he was harmless—as they did Lawrence—and the men as if the women had told them so."

he honestly confessed that every day after the vegetable repast he ate a good beef-steak. This fact plunged the others in despair, and Leigh Hunt assured me that on vegetable diet his constitution had received a blow from which he had never recovered."

The quarrel which had been brewing for some time between Haydon and Hunt broke out late in the year. Keats, who was not involved, reported the immediate cause to his brothers George and Thomas in his letter of January 13, 1818. Mrs. Hunt, it seems, "was in the habit of borrowing silver from Haydon—the last time she did so, Haydon asked her to return it at a certain time—she did not—Haydon sent for it—Hunt went to expostulate on the indelicacy &c.—they got to words and parted for ever. All I hope is at some time to bring them all together again."<sup>5</sup>

The real cause of the quarrel, however, probably lay deeper. It seems likely that Keats himself, or rather the rivalry for primacy in Keats's friendship, may have been at the root of the trouble. Haydon felt very strongly that Hunt was having a bad influence upon his friend. Keats himself, in fact, had already begun to recognize Hunt's deficiencies in matters of taste if not of morals. On September 21, 1817, he wrote to Reynolds: "What a very pleasant fellow [Hunt] is, if he would give up the sovereignty of a Room pro bono. What Evenings we might pass with him, could we have him from Mrs. H." Three weeks later in a letter to Bailey, his friend at Oxford, he half agreed that Haydon's warning about showing *Endymion* to Hunt was justified; and by the end of 1818, he had little respect left for his former friend. He wrote to George and Georgiana Keats:

Hunt is certainly a pleasant fellow in the main when you are with him—but in reality [*sic*] he is vain, egotistical, and disgusting in matters of taste and in morals. He understands many a beautiful thing; but then, instead of giving other minds credit for the same degree of perception as he himself professes—he begins an explanation in such a curious manner that our taste and self-love is offended continually. Hunt does one harm by making fine things pretty and beautiful things hateful. Through him I am indifferent to Mozart, I care not for white Busts—many a glorious thing when

<sup>5</sup>The "silver" over which they quarreled Sidney Colvin interprets as "money"; Miss Lowell, as "spoons." Of course, from what one knows of Marianne Hunt, an erratic creature at best, it might have been either.

associated with him becomes a nothing. This distorts one's mind—make[s] one's thoughts bizarre—Perplexes one in the standards of Beauty.

This criticism was no doubt severe, but from Keats's point of view it was essentially just. And it does a great deal to account for his preference for Haydon. The painter, at least, was not one to be guilty of making "fine things pretty" or "beautiful things hateful." His soaring—if sometimes ill-controlled—imagination, his ideals of grandeur and dignity, Keats found much more to his taste than the languid delicacy of Leigh Hunt.

Haydon, a good hater, had definitely broken with Hunt, and his censure must have been even more severe than Keats's if his letter to Sir Walter Scott, written ten years later, may be accepted in evidence.

Byron must have had a dose with Hunt and his family. Hunt says in his book that Byron had no address after [being] attacked by a *Lady*—meaning of course *Mrs. Hunt*. He forgets that Lord Byron was perhaps too much disgusted—perhaps she occasionally picked her nose as she entertained his Lordship, as she used often to do when she attempted to entertain others. Oh, Sir Walter, what a delightful book I could write of Leigh Hunt and his companions as a pendant to *Lord Byron and his Contemporaries*, and I am not quite sure I won't. . . . I have been the victim of being mingled up with a set of people I despised for their grossness, immorality, and utter want of national feeling. But Leigh Hunt is like Sylla—grass never grows where he comes. His friendship is fatal: he ruined Keats, as Keats told me, and he has tainted my fame and character and destroyed the fortune of his Brother, who really is an honest and noble character.

Haydon also quarreled with Reynolds about this time; and as Reynolds was still one of Hunt's intimates, the break with the Hunt circle was virtually complete. Keats, however, was not involved and maintained at least a nominal friendship with all the persons concerned. As Keats reported it, the Reynolds quarrel was occasioned by Haydon's invitation of a number of his friends to meet Wordsworth. This may have been at the time of the "immortal dinner." In any event, Haydon had invited Reynolds, who not only did not come but neglected to send his regrets. Haydon was inordinately sensitive about such matters, although he himself was by no means reliable in meeting his appointments. He wrote Reynolds, rebuking him, and then, regretting his sharpness, he wrote another note which he considered conciliatory. Reynolds, however, felt the second note

to be an aggravation of the first and answered them both in a letter which Keats said was the most cutting he had ever read. The break in their friendship was abrupt and absolute: they were never reconciled.

Late in December Wordsworth made one of his infrequent visits to London. On the 22nd he sat to Haydon for the head which the painter was introducing into *Jerusalem*. Keats had sat for his earlier, probably during the summer. Wordsworth was particularly gracious during his sitting and read to the painter, as he loved to do, from his own poetry: "all the book of 'Despondence Corrected,' in his 'Excursion,' in the finest manner." During this same visit Keats was introduced to Wordsworth, to whom Haydon had previously communicated the "Great spirits" sonnet. In the *Autobiography* Haydon says the introduction took place at his "immortal dinner" on December 28, but in an unpublished letter quoted by Miss Lowell he gives another version which may well be the correct one:

When Wordsworth came to Town I brought Keats to him by his (Wordsworth's) desire—Keats expressed to me as we walked to Queen Anne St. East where Mr. Monkhouse Lodged, the greatest, the purest, the most unalloyed pleasure at the prospect. Wordsworth received him kindly, & after a few minutes, Wordsworth asked him what he had been lately doing, I said—he has just finished an exquisite Ode to Pan—and as he had not a copy I begged Keats to repeat it—which he did in his usual half chant, (most touching) walking up and down the room—when he had done I felt really, as if I had heard a young Apollo—Wordsworth dryly said "A very pretty piece of Paganism."

That was unfeeling, and unworthy of his high genius to a Young Worshipper like Keats—and Keats felt it *deeply*—so that if Keats has said anything severe about our Friend; it is because he was wounded and though he dined with Wordsworth after at my table—he never forgave him. . . .

All Hunt's assertions about this being said at my house is a mistake.<sup>6</sup>

Haydon's description of the immortal dinner occupies several pages of the *Autobiography*. It is perhaps the best known passage in any of his writing, but he has so magnificently succeeded in

<sup>6</sup>Hunt in his *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries* had said the "very pretty piece of Paganism" incident took place at Haydon's and Severn also recollected the gathering at Haydon's where the recitation occurred, but neither Hunt nor Severn was present, so far as one knows, at the "immortal dinner." .

clothing the names of Keats, Lamb, and Wordsworth in their habiliments of flesh and blood, that I have ventured to reproduce it here.

In December Wordsworth was in town, and as Keats wished to know him I made up a party to dinner of Charles Lamb, Wordsworth, Keats and Monkhouse, his friend; and a very pleasant party we had.

I wrote to Lamb, and told him the address was "22 Lisson Grove, North, at Rossi's, half way up, right hand corner." I received his characteristic reply.

"My dear Haydon,

I will come with pleasure to 22 Lisson Grove, North, at Rossi's, half way up, right hand side, if I can find it.

"Yours,

"C. Lamb.

"20, Russel Court,

Covent Garden East,

half way up, next the corner,

left hand side."

On December 28th the immortal dinner came off in my painting-room, with Jerusalem towering up behind us as a background. Wordsworth was in fine cue, and we had a glorious set-to—on Homer, Shakespeare, Milton and Virgil. Lamb got exceedingly merry and exquisitely witty; and his fun in the midst of Wordsworth's solemn intonations of oratory was like the sarcasm and wit of the fool in the intervals of Lear's passion. He made a speech and voted me absent, and made them drink my health. "Now," said Lamb, "you old lake poet, you rascally poet, why do you call Voltaire dull?" We all defended Wordsworth, and affirmed there was a state of mind when Voltaire would be dull. "Well," said Lamb, "here's Voltaire—the Messiah of the French nation, and a very proper one too."

He then, in a strain of humour beyond description, abused me for putting Newton's head into my picture; "a fellow," said he, "who believed nothing unless it was as clear as the three sides of a triangle." And then he and Keats agreed he had destroyed all the poetry of the rainbow by reducing it to the prismatic colours. It was impossible to resist him, and we all drank "Newton's health, and confusion to mathematics." It was delightful to see the good humour of Wordsworth in giving in to all our frolics without affectation and laughing as heartily as the best of us.

By this time other friends joined, amongst them poor Ritchie who was going to penetrate by Fezzan to Timbuctoo. I introduced him to all as "a gentleman going to Africa." Lamb seemed to take no notice; but all of a sudden he roared out: "Which is the gentleman we are going to lose?" We then drank the victim's health, in which Ritchie joined.

In the morning of this delightful day, a gentleman, a perfect stranger, had called on me. He said he knew my friends, had an enthusiasm for

Wordsworth, and begged I would procure him the happiness of an introduction. He told me he was a comptroller of stamps, and often had correspondence with the poet. I thought it a liberty; but still, as he seemed a gentleman, I told him he might come.

When we retired to tea we found the comptroller. In introducing him to Wordsworth I forgot to say who he was. After a little time the comptroller looked down, looked up and said to Wordsworth: "Don't you think, sir, Milton was a great genius?" Keats looked at me, Wordsworth looked at the comptroller. Lamb who was dozing by the fire turned round and said: "Pray, sir, did you say Milton was a great genius?" "No, sir; I asked Mr. Wordsworth if he were not." "Oh," said Lamb, "then you are a silly fellow." "Charles! my dear Charles!" said Wordsworth; but Lamb, perfectly innocent of the confusion he had created, was off again by the fire.

After an awful pause the comptroller said: "Don't you think Newton a great genius?" I could not stand it any longer. Keats put his head into my books. Ritchie squeezed in a laugh. Wordsworth seemed asking himself: "Who is this?" Lamb got up, and taking a candle, said, "Sir, will you allow me to look at your phrenological development?" He then turned his back on the poor man, and at every question of the comptroller he chanted:

"Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John  
Went to bed with his breeches on."

The man in office, finding Wordsworth did not know who he was, said in a spasmodic and half-chuckling anticipation of assured victory: "I have the honour of some correspondence with you, Mr. Wordsworth." "With me, Sir?" said Wordsworth, "not that I remember." "Don't you, sir? I am a comptroller of stamps." There was a dead silence, the comptroller evidently thinking that was enough. While we were waiting for Wordsworth's reply, Lamb sung out:

"Hey diddle diddle,  
The cat and the fiddle."

"My dear Charles!" said Wordsworth.

"Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John,"

chaunted Lamb, and then rising, exclaimed: "Do let me have another look at that gentleman's organs." Keats and I hurried Lamb into the painting-room, shut the door and gave way to inextinguishable laughter. Monkhouse followed and tried to get Lamb away. We went back, but the comptroller was irreconcilable. We soothed and smiled and asked him to supper. He stayed though his dignity was sorely affected. However, being a good-natured man, we parted all in good humour, and no ill effects followed.

All the while, until Monkhouse succeeded, we could hear Lamb struggling in the painting-room and calling at intervals: "Who is that fellow? Allow me to see his organs once more."

It was indeed an immortal evening. Wordsworth's fine intonation as he quoted Milton and Virgil, Keats' eager inspired look, Lamb's quaint sparkle

of lambent humour, so speeded the stream of conversation, that in my life I never passed a more delightful time. All our fun was within bounds. Not a word passed that an apostle might not have listened to. It was a night worthy of the Elizabethan age, and my solemn Jerusalem flashing up by the flame of the fire, with Christ hanging over us like a vision, all made up a picture which will long glow upon

“that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude.”

Keats mentions the dinner briefly in a letter to George and Tom Keats on January 5, 1818:

... my Sunday Evening at Haydon's ... Richer [Joseph Ritchie] ... was very polite to me ... then there was Wordsworth, Lamb, Monkhouse, Landseer [whom Haydon does not mention], Kingston [the Commissioner of Stamps] and your humble Sarvant. Lamb got tipsey and blew up Kingston—proceeding so far as to take a Candle across the Room hold it to his face and show us wh-a-at-sort-fello-he-wass[.] I astonished Kingston at supper with a pertinacity in favour of drinking—keeping my two glasses at work in a knowing way—snugly together—he sent me a Hare last week which I sent to Mrs. Dilk[e].

Lamb's mention of the affair is even more brief. He refers to it, to Kingston, at least, in a letter to Mrs. Wordsworth dated East India House, 18th February 1818: “that gentleman concerned in the Stamp Office, that I so strongly recoiled from at Haydon's.” Lamb's choice of words is ever delightful and refreshing.

In September 1817 had begun an affair which threatened for a time to wreck the friendship between Haydon and Keats. Keats was then visiting Bailey at Oxford, and Haydon wrote asking him to look up a young art student whose work Haydon had thought promising during a recent visit to the University. He was, he said, willing to train the young man “with no further remuneration than the pleasure of seeing him advance.” Keats obliged and wrote a full and favorable account of the student, whose name was Cripps. “He does not,” he said, “possess the Philosopher's stone—nor Fortunatus' purse, nor Gyges' ring ... but I have a great Idea that he will be a tolerable neat brush.” And Keats and Bailey were going to try to plan some means of enabling Cripps to benefit by Haydon's apparently generous offer.



When Keats returned to London early in October, he found Haydon much less eager to come to terms with him about Cripps. Quite possibly he regretted the liberal offer he had made, seeing in it no financial rewards; possibly Keats's lack of enthusiasm for Cripps's artistic powers was not encouraging. In November Keats was still concerned about the young man, and on the 22nd he wrote to Bailey commiserating him on an unpleasant letter which Haydon had written him. "As soon as I had known Haydon three days I had got enough of his character not to have been surprised at such a Letter as he has hurt you with. Nor when I knew it was it a principle with me to drop his acquaintance."

By the middle of January 1818, friendly relations between Haydon and Keats were firmly restored, and the poet wrote of the advisability of having Cripps bound to Haydon as an apprentice. For this it would be necessary to obtain a subscription of between £150 and £200. He concluded his letter on a note of warm praise. "Your friendship for me is now getting into its teens—and I feel the past. Also every day older I get—the greater is my idea of your achievements in Art: and I am convinced that there are three things to rejoice at in this Age—The Excursion, your Pictures, and Hazlitt's depth of taste." And he signed himself, "Yours affectionately." Haydon was pleased and replied in kind: "I feel greatly delighted by your high opinion, allow me to add sincerely a fourth to be proud of—*John Keats' genius!*—This I speak from my heart.—You and Bewick are the only men I ever liked with all my heart, for Wordsworth being older, there is no equality tho' I reverence him and love him devotedly—and now you know my peculiar feelings in wishing to have a notice when you cannot keep an engagement with me; there can never be as long as we live any ground of dispute between us." For he evidently did not wish his friendship with Keats to go the way of his acquaintance with Reynolds.

On February 5, Cripps received his final mention in Keats's letters; I can find no further notice of him anywhere. He does not appear to have been regularly enrolled as a student at the University. Keats may have been somewhat disillusioned about Haydon by this affair, as his letter to Bailey suggests, but their friendship was not seriously interrupted. And surely, the details of the Cripps

incident are not clearly enough known to justify any condemnation of Haydon for his part in it.<sup>7</sup>

*Endymion* had been finished in November 1817. The following January, Book One was sent to the press; the entire poem was published in April. Haydon had been unfailing in his encouragement. For a time he had considered doing a chalk drawing of Keats's head as a frontispiece, but to his later regret he failed to do so.<sup>8</sup>

The social gatherings at Haydon's continued through 1818. Horatio Smith, Hazlitt, and John Hunt continued to call. Coleridge, already clouded in the mists which wreathed his later years, was an occasional visitor at the studio and was at St. James Street among the distinguished company which honored the private day of the exhibition of Cartoon and Elgin Marbles drawings by Haydon's pupils.

In February Haydon was in Devonshire. In March Keats journeyed thither to be with his brothers George and Thomas. When he arrived there on the 4th, the painter had already left. Haydon dashed off a breathless note to Keats regarding a gold signet ring which had been found "in a field belonging to Shakespeare" and which apparently bore his initials.<sup>9</sup> Keats replied somewhat skeptically, enclosing "some dogrel" (the lines beginning "Here all the summer could I stay") and "a bit of B—hrell" ("Where be ye going, you Devon Maid"?). The concluding sentences of this letter are the familiar ones praising Hazlitt's merits as a "damner."<sup>10</sup> Haydon's reply on March 25 expressed pleasure at the "bi—ell" and advised Keats not to miss going to Plymouth, offering him

<sup>7</sup>Miss Lowell finds it an example of "Keats's generous willingness to spend himself for other people, and Haydon's unreliability." Sidney Colvin speaks of the incident as "some failure of Haydon's to keep his word or take trouble about a young man."

<sup>8</sup>There are, however, at least five representations of Keats's head from Haydon's pencil: the one in *Jerusalem*, the sketch reproduced in the *Correspondence and Table-Talk*, a sketch from memory in a letter to Elizabeth Barrett, the head in the upper right background of *Lazarus*, and a crude and unsatisfactory sketch from memory reproduced from the journals by Miss Hewlett in her *Life of Keats* (2nd ed.).

<sup>9</sup>Professor Willard B. Pope informs me that this ring is now in one of the exhibition cases in the Shakespeare House at Stratford.

<sup>10</sup>"It is a great Pity that People should by associating themselves with the finest things, spoil them. Hunt has damned Hampstead a[nd] masks and sonnets and Italian tales. Wordsworth has damned the lakes—Milman has damned the old drama—West has damned—wholesale. Peacock has damned satire—Ollier has damn'd Music—Hazlitt has damned the bigoted and the blue-stockin[g]ed; how durst the Man?! he is your only good damner, and if ever I am damn'd—damn me if I shouldn't like him to damn me."

letters of introduction. *Jerusalem* was progressing, he said; "God grant [*Endymion*] the most complete success." Keats continued on April 10, writing the painter about his proposed trip to Scotland and the north of England, a trip which was destined to bring on the first severe attack of his fatal illness. "I am nearer myself," he wrote, "to hear your Christ is being tinted into immortality. Believe me Haydon your picture is part of myself."

Early in May Haydon wrote his congratulations on *Endymion*. "I have read your delicious Poem," he began, "with exquisite enjoyment, it is the most delightful thing of the time. . . . Success attend you my glorious fellow."

The intimacy between Haydon and Keats seems, on the whole, to have been on the wane during 1818. Keats, it is true, still signed his letters as cordially as ever: "Yours ever," "Yours affectionately," and "Your's like a Pyramid"; and Haydon was equally friendly. But their meetings were less frequent. Without any sign of a quarrel, they were growing apart. Both were away from London for considerable periods during the year. Keats, on his return from his northern tour, saw almost no one. Tom Keats was dying; Keats's own health was none too good, and he had no desire for society under the circumstances. Haydon was in Devonshire in the spring; and with the hope of improving his eyes, he visited his sister at Bridgewater in the fall. It is also probable that he was with Wordsworth at Rydal Mount for a time during the summer.

Haydon's eyes were giving him a great deal of trouble. The *Annals*, of course, kept its readers informed of his condition. Later, Elmes wrote in his "Memoirs": "We saw him during this painful time, day after day, pacing his dark room. He has been accused of being irritable, violent, and impetuous . . . but we never saw him once out of temper or in low spirits. . . . He dictated to us, during that time, the paper on the comparison of the Venetian and the Elgin horse's heads . . . and seemed as full of nerve and hope as ever."

Eighteen-nineteen saw the breaking up of the intimacy between Haydon and Keats. They continued friends to the last, but the spirit had gone out of their relationship. The trouble arose, as it so frequently did where Haydon was concerned, over money. The letters that passed between the two men tell all that can be known of the

story, a story which has often been related by the biographers of Keats to Haydon's discredit. But a careful and dispassionate examination of the evidence makes Haydon's sole guilt in the matter less certain. The incident, too, has its tragi-comic aspects which should not be overlooked.

Toward the end of 1818, Haydon evidently approached his friend, in a letter which has not been preserved, regarding a loan; for on December 22, Keats wrote:

Believe me Haydon I have that sort of fire in my heart that would sacrifice every thing that I have to your service—I speak without any reserve—I know you would do so for me—I open my heart to you in a few words. I will do this sooner than you shall be distressed: but let me be the last stay—Ask the rich lovers of Art first—I'll tell you why—I have a little money which may enable me to study, and to travel for three or four years. I never expect to get anything by my Books. . . . Try the long purses—but do not sell your drawing[s] or I shall consider it a breach of friendship.

Haydon replied at once in a long and effusive letter:

I approve most completely [of] your plan of travels and study, and [s]hould suffer torture if my wants [in]terrupted it—in short they shall not [m]y dear Keats. I believe you from my soul when you say you would sacrifice all for me; and when your means are gone, if God give me means my heart and house and home and everything shall be shared with you—I mean this too. It has often occurred to me but I have never spoken of it. . . .

But the patience of his friends, Haydon continued, was exhausted; his health was bad; and the lovers of art offended his sensitive soul by their delays and considerations. Keats evidently called on Haydon soon after, for there were notes planning a meeting. In the meantime, it is quite possible that the painter was trying the "long purses." Keats's note of January 2 was more than ordinarily affectionate, calling the painter "one who has been my true friend" and promising an all day visit the next day when "we will hate the profane vulgar and make us Wings."

Haydon's attacks on the "rich lovers of Art" were apparently unavailing, for on January 7, probably not much more than two weeks after his first request for a loan, he wrote: "I now frankly tell you I will accept your friendly offer. . . . I am disappointed where I expected not to be and my only hope for the concluding

difficulties of my Picture lie[s] in *you*. . . . Do let me hear from you how you are, and when I shall get my bond ready for you, for that is the best way for me to do, at two years." Keats replied hopefully on the 11th: "I will be in town early tomorrow, and I trust I shall be able to assist you noon or night." And he signed himself "Your affectionate friend." He was evidently, however, over-sanguine, for a second note followed a day or two later: "I shall have a little trouble in procuring the Money . . . do not be at all anxious, for *this* time I really will do, what I never did before in my life, business in good time, and properly.—With respect to the Bond—it may be a satisfaction to you to let me have it: but as you love me do not let there be any mention of interest." Haydon found this letter "every thing that is kind, affectionate and friendly. I depend upon it; it has relieved my anxious mind." But there were further delays. Keats found his guardian difficult. The money, which had been Tom Keats's, was, the poet discovered, somewhat encumbered. There the matter rested. More than a month later, Keats was still writing his encouragements to Haydon: "Nor must you think I have forgotten you. No, I have about every three days been to Abbey's and to the Law[y]ers." Haydon replied to this on March 10, urging his immediate need of Keats's "promised assistance," before the 20th if at all possible.

A month later Haydon wrote again, but this time his patience was at an end. One who realizes his continual financial straits will scarcely be surprised. He upbraided Keats for holding out "delusive hopes" and blamed him for increasing his financial difficulties. "I am sensible of the trouble you took—I am grateful for it, but upon my Soul I cannot help complaining because the result has been so unexpected and sudden—and I am floundering where I hoped to be firm.—Don't mistake me—I am as attached to you as much and more than to any man—but really you don't know how [you] may affect me by not letting me know earlier." In his reply, Keats tried to make his position clear; toward its close, his letter became almost querulous: "I am doubly hurt at the slightly reproachful tone of your note . . . now you have maimed me again; I was whole, I had begun reading again—when your note came I was engaged in a Book. . . ."

Between April 13, the date of this last letter, and June 17, 1819, a loan was evidently consummated, for on the latter date Keats wrote Haydon asking for repayment.<sup>11</sup> Quite evidently the painter had had the money no longer than two months, and under the very conditions necessitating the loan Keats must have known that it would be impossible for him to repay it so soon. Haydon was quite openly living on borrowed money in anticipation of the success of *Jerusalem*. All his friends must have known this: he made no secret of the fact. He had no dependable income and could expect none until his picture was finished and exhibited, and yet Keats was disgruntled when he made no apparent effort to repay a two months' loan. On September 20, 1819, he wrote George and Georgiana Keats, who had emigrated to America and were themselves in financial straits:

Before this Chancery threat had cut off[f] every legitimate supp[ly] of Cash from me I had a little at my disposal: Haydon being very much in want I lent him £30 of it. Now in this se[e]-saw game of Life I got nearest to the ground and this chancery business rivetted me there. . . . I applied to him for payment—he could not—that was no wonder; but goodman Delver, where was the wonder then, why marry, in this, he did not seem to care much about it—and let me go without my money with almost non-chalance when he ought to have sold his drawings to supply me. I shall perhaps still be acquainted with him, but for friendship that is at an end. Brown has been my friend in this—he got him to sign a Bond payable at three Months. . . .

One wonders, from this, what had become of Keats's injunction that Haydon was not to sell his drawings "or I shall consider it a breach of friendship." And the bond—which Haydon had suggested be drawn up "at two years," and which Keats had been willing to accept because "it may be a satisfaction to you to let me have it"—the bond had been made payable at three months! The insignificance of the sum, £30, is, of course, apparent to anyone who has read Haydon's descriptions of his own epic borrowings. It is sad and ironic that Haydon's most intimate and memorable friendship should have come to grief over such an amount.

<sup>11</sup>Miss Lowell makes much of the supposition that Keats did not ask "the return of the whole loan, he merely asked for 'some' money." What Keats actually wrote was, "Do borrow or beg some how what you can for me." And considering the insignificance of the sum borrowed, it would seem that Miss Lowell's distinction is not important. She then continues, with passionate inaccuracy: "Haydon's capacity for borrowing was inexhaustible, but he never paid his debts. . . ."

It has always been assumed that Haydon never repaid this loan, although there is no evidence on the point one way or the other. If he did not, the fact is no doubt damaging to the painter's reputation. It should be remembered, however, that by the time the profits from *Jerusalem* were in Haydon's hands (November 4, 1820), Keats had already sailed for Italy with Severn, and Haydon, with £1,298, 2s. to his credit, was paying it out in handfuls; for, as he said, "everybody to whom I owed a shilling took it into their heads that they had only to press me to get their cash."

The ethics of the early borrowings of Haydon is easier to understand than to defend. A modern critic will probably judge him more severely than would a contemporary. For one thing, the eighteenth century concept of patronage still persisted, with its underlying notion that the artist was entitled to support by someone—the state, his friends, or his patrons. Haydon, it is certain, was by no means unique in his period in the extent of his borrowings. William Godwin and Leigh Hunt, to mention two examples, were notorious borrowers, and neither was over-scrupulous about repaying "advances." It should be said, however, that they borrowed chiefly from Shelley, who was able far better than Keats to spare the money.<sup>12</sup> But the loan from Keats was a very minor item on Haydon's balance sheet. During the years he was painting *Jerusalem*, Haydon was mainly supported by advances from his more well-to-do friends, Dawson Turner, Jeremiah Harman, Watson Taylor, and Mr. Thomas Coutts, the eminent banker, who had married Harriot Mellon, the actress, an old acquaintance of Haydon's. It seems likely that Haydon intended to repay these loans in full, for his pictures were bringing him good prices and generous premiums and he considered himself, on the whole, a good risk.

There are four more letters extant from Keats to Haydon; two from Haydon to Keats. The poet's letters seem quite as full of admiration as ever, but they have, as Maurice Buxton Forman points out, a "certain reserve of tone." There was, however, no decided coldness: Keats had apparently forgiven if not forgotten

<sup>12</sup>Cosmo Monkhouse in his biography of Leigh Hunt records that Hunt "took £1,400 from Shelley in one year, an amount considerably exceeding Shelley's income at that time, and he knew that he put him to great inconvenience to raise the money . . . he increased his pecuniary obligations to Shelley afterwards, and never paid him a penny."

the injury. Haydon's two letters expressed much the same feeling of affection and respect as before. The first, written probably in July 1820 while Keats was living with Hunt at Kentish Town, showed Haydon's genuine concern over Keats's illness. In it he recommended his own physician and long time friend, Dr. George Darling, whom Keats shortly afterwards consulted.<sup>13</sup> The other letter is of no particular interest.

Too great emphasis should not be placed upon the failure of the intimacy between Haydon and Keats during 1820. The rapid progress of Keats's fatal illness and the intensity of his passion for Fanny Brawne kept him more and more to himself. "If I cannot live with you I will live alone," he had written her; in fact, most of his former intimates had lost their interest for him. Brown and Severn were about the only friends who saw him at all. On January 13-15 he wrote Georgiana Augusta Keats in far off Louisville, Kentucky:

You say in one of your letters that there was nothing but Haydon and Co in mine. There can be nothing of him in this, for I never see him or Co. . . . To me it is all as dull here as Louisville could be. I am tired of the Theatres. Almost all parties I may chance to fall into I know by heart. I know the different style of talk in different places, what subjects will be started how it will proceed, like an acted play, from the first to the last act. If I go to Hunt's, I run my head into many times heard puns and music. To Haydon's worn out discourses of poetry and painting. The Miss Reynolds I am afraid to speak to for fear of some sickly reiteration of Phrase or Sentiment.

And in June, Keats wrote to Charles Brown a letter which shows all too clearly how dim the flame was burning: "I met —— in town, a few days ago, who invited me to supper to meet Wordsworth, Southey, Lamb, Haydon, and some more; I was too careful of my health to risk being out at night."

The last meeting between Haydon and Keats took place in the early autumn of 1820, not long before the poet's departure for Italy. Keats had written: "I am glad to hear you are in progress with another Picture. Go on. I am afraid I shall pop off just when [my] mind is able to run alone." And he hoped to see the painter

<sup>13</sup>In a copy of Haydon's *Lectures on Painting and Design* (vol. 1) in the writer's possession appears the inscription: "To Dr. Darling, with affection/ and respect,/ after 34 years experience/ from/ B. R. Haydon/ Oct: 10: 1844."



shortly. Haydon called soon afterward and was profoundly affected. He described the visit in his journal, reporting, no doubt with some exaggeration, Keats's depressed state and his own dismay at his friend's condition.

The recollections of Keats which the painter left in the *Autobiography* and in his journals and letters have been widely quoted by the poet's biographers. Some of his comments may be accounted among the finest and most discriminating things ever said about the poet; others, less favorable to Keats, have occasioned a great deal of protest. Rossetti's favorable judgment of the reliability of Haydon's observations has already been remarked. But Miss Lowell does not agree. "Haydon," she says, "was a gentleman of oblique vision, given to profuse statement. In this case [the cayenne pepper and claret incident], the false emphasis he has laid, and willfully laid, upon a boyish prank, is something one finds it hard to forgive. 'If you want to make a man your enemy, lend him money,' that proverb is the cue to Haydon's attitude in these posthumous recollections." She also objects with some force to Haydon's remark that "For six weeks [toward the end] he was scarcely sober," calling it "an absolute untruth, as we have Brown's testimony to prove." On this matter, Miss Dorothy Hewlett's more temperate comment, previously quoted in these pages, is probably closer to the truth.

CHAPTER  
· S E V E N ·

## King's Bench and After

1821-1827

THE STORY of the last twenty-five years of Haydon's life is one of slow failure and defeat. There were for him moments of success and hope; but now, in retrospect, one sees an implacable march of events moving ever toward final disaster and ruin. The details of Haydon's journey make a painful story, but one full of courage. Haydon was a brave man and a stout fighter. Die he had to, and by his own hand; but to the end he was tough and tenacious of life.

Any such mournful prophetic strain would have seemed unreal to Haydon in 1821. At that time he had reached the first summit of success; the years ahead seemed full of promise. His ideas of art had been in large measure vindicated. His paintings had brought him fame and reputation and generous rewards in solid cash. The nation and the world of art had accepted his judgment of the Elgin Marbles. He had been praised and his art had been celebrated by eminent poets and distinguished foreigners. Even the savage Scots had been brought to heel. True, he had made many firm enemies, and the Royal Academy was still unconvinced. But with another such success as *Jerusalem* it was inconceivable that they should refuse him much longer.

But the net which he himself had woven was closing about him. Undoubtedly he had courage. If in addition he had possessed the power to judge himself and his behavior objectively, his story might have been less tragic, his lifetime of labor less futile. But he seemed incapable of learning from experience. *Jerusalem*, an astonishing success, had been painted on borrowed money; and when its exhibitions were over and its profits all dispersed, Haydon was still heavily in debt. Wisdom, plain common sense, in fact,

would have dictated a thorough and systematic regimen of economy. But if such an idea did occur to him, he impatiently brushed it aside as unworthy of a genius of his stature. In doing so he confirmed his own doom.

Never afterward was he free from debts, debts which wrenched him from his visions of High Art to chaffer with his creditors, which drove him to hateful labors, which dragged him four times to the degradation of the debtors' prison. Under their burden his peace was destroyed, his confidence in himself undermined.

Never again was he quite able to recapture the grasp and mastery which he had felt in painting *Dentatus* and *Solomon* and *Jerusalem*. Necessity forced him into uncongenial and undignified fields, into portrait, genre, and subject painting, into the photographic mass portraiture of public banquets and conventions, and the manufacture of replicas of past successes. His painting, once painstaking and careful, the product of minute research, became hurried, even slovenly. Always the pressure of his debts kept him living from hand to mouth. Periods of blank despair alternated with frenzied production. There were, of course, exceptional moments when in the act of painting he could recapture some of the exaltation of earlier years, could console himself with the illusion that his power was unimpaired. But the inner voice which had once urged him on no longer spoke to him with its old authority. It was becoming jaded and uncertain. And he drove himself forward no longer by an excess of energy and self-confidence but by sheer force of will against his doubts and difficulties.

As early as 1824, a writer in *Blackwood's* recognized, at least in part, the signs of this deterioration. In an article on the state of English art he wrote: "Haydon is perhaps, after Wilkie, the cleverest man [among contemporary artists]; and, without question, he might stand by the side of the highest of them, if he had sense and taste in proportion to talent. As it is, his *Judgment of Solomon* . . . is still the best historical picture that has appeared in our time, and his *head* of Lazarus the finest *head*. But he has . . . retrograded rather than advanced, both in execution and in reputation. . . ." And Charles Robert Leslie, later, in retrospect, remarked the "almost regular decrease of excellence in his pictures, from the

'Solomon' to the end of his life, parallel with his increasing troubles."

The year 1821 was clouded for Haydon by the loss of two of his dearest friends, who died within a week of each other. John Scott, formerly editor of the *Champion* and more recently first editor of the *London Magazine*, was mortally wounded in a duel, a consequence of his quarrel with Lockhart, and died on February 27. His friendship with Haydon had been of long standing. On more than one occasion he had praised the painter in print and had supported his ideas. There had been some coolness between them toward the last, but Haydon felt keenly the loss of this courageous advocate and loyal friend. "Poor Scott," he wrote, shortly after the funeral, "peace go with him. It is a consolation to think that in those very fields where he was shot he told me, last summer (after his boy's death), that he felt life as a bridge over which he was walking into eternity."

News of Keats's death (February 23) reached Haydon on March 29. The tidings affected him even more deeply, and in his journal for that date he set down his comments and reflections. "A genius more purely poetical never existed," he began, and went on to analyze as impartially as he was able the poet's strength and weaknesses. Keats's memory was always green for Haydon; and his recollections, while by no means blind to what he considered his friend's faults, give clear evidence of the bond of affection between them.

A tea at Mrs. Siddons's had enlivened an evening earlier in March. Haydon, with other more or less distinguished guests, had been invited to hear her read *Macbeth*. She played the title role, Haydon thought, even better than Kemble or Kean. "It is extraordinary," he wrote, "the awe this wonderful woman inspires."

After her first reading the men retired to tea. While we were all eating toast and tingling cups and saucers, she began again. It was like the effect of a mass bell at Madrid. All noise ceased; we slunk to our seats like boors, two or three of the most distinguished men of the day, with the very toast in their mouths, afraid to bite. It was curious to see Lawrence in this predicament, to hear him bite by degrees, and then stop for fear of making too much crackle, his eyes full of water from the constraint; and at the same time to hear Mrs. Siddons' "eye of newt and toe of frog!" and then to see Lawrence give a sly bite, and then look awed and pretend to be listening.

I went away highly gratified, and as I stood on the landing-place to get cool I overheard my servant in the hall say: "What! is that the old lady making such a noise?" "Yes." "Why, she makes as much noise as ever!" "Yes," was the answer; "she tunes her pipes as well as ever she did."

Haydon was active socially during the year; his journals give some idea of the extent of his acquaintance and the breadth of his interests. Giovanni Belzoni, the Italian explorer and Egyptologist, dined with him and found the painter an interested and intelligent listener. Haydon called on Jeffrey for breakfast just as the critic was about to have his face cast. Sydney Smith was there and very playful, and as a result the cast was ruined. In May, Haydon attended the extended sale of Reynolds's work at Christie's and persuaded Sir George Phillips to buy the *Piping Shepherd* for 400 guineas. The next day Northcote spitefully remarked to Phillips that his picture was "a very poor thing." Phillips was dismayed, much to Haydon's amusement.

About this time, too, Haydon was acquainted with John Martin, painter of vast architectural landscapes and strange apocalyptic subject pictures, engravings of which were still popular some seventy-five years ago: *Belshazzar's Feast*, *The Deluge*, *The Destruction of Herculaneum and Pompeii*. Except for a mutual dislike of the Royal Academy, they had little in common, but they were friendly and did see each other occasionally. In 1823 when Rubens's *Chapeau de Paille* was on exhibition at Staley's in Old Bond Street, they visited it in company. There, according to Bewick, "Both artists viewed it closely, admiring its solidity, its transparency, and its purity of tone, without uttering one word. They did not seem to breathe. At length Haydon said to me, 'There Bewick, take your fill of that. It's a complete lesson to any painter.'"

On July 19, Haydon attended the coronation of George IV, which Tom Taylor calls "the most gorgeous ceremonial of our time, the last coronation at which the champion threw down the glove against all gainsayers of the King's right and title."<sup>1</sup> But, in contrast to all that grandeur, he had, just a month earlier, suffered the first of what was to be an unending series of indignities of a similar sort—he had been arrested. The amount involved was small; the

<sup>1</sup>Haydon's description of this affair is included herein as an appendix.

affair was settled to his creditor's satisfaction by evening, but the law expenses came to £11, and he could ill afford even that sum.

Shortly after his return from Scotland, Haydon had hurriedly completed *Christ's Agony in the Garden*, the picture which Sir George Phillips had commissioned and for which he had advanced the painter the full price, 500 guineas. It was a wretched failure, as Haydon later admitted—too large, for one thing, badly painted, and entirely unsuitable for domestic decoration. Robert Hunt, ever uncritical toward Haydon's productions, reviewed it in a tone of high flattery in the *Examiner*; and *The New Monthly Magazine* was loud in its praise of the picture and its painter. But Haydon knew better. "Such a conclusion after such noble liberality," he wrote, "was painful."

Sir George's picture out of the way, Haydon began a painting which he resolved to make his "grandest" and "largest" work: *The Raising of Lazarus*. It occupied him for the next two years.

My room was 30 feet long, 20 wide, 15 high. So I ordered a canvas 19 long by 15 high, and dashed in my conception, the Christ being 9 feet high.

This was a size and a subject which I loved to my very marrow. But how should I get through it? "Go on," said the inward voice I had heard from my youth; "work and trust"; and trust and work I did. . . .

Two years must elapse before it could be done. Still at the canvas I flew and made all my studies in gasping anxiety. My manservant (Sammons) was my model and always at hand. I prayed ardently to get through it, never doubting.

For five years now, Haydon had been deeply in love. Despite his financial condition and his doubtful prospects, he decided to get married. Through Maria Foote, a mutual friend, he had met Mary Hyman in 1816 at the deathbed of her husband:

I walked up into a neat, small drawing-room, and in one instant the loveliest face that was ever created since God made Eve smiled gently at my approach. The effect of her beauty was instantaneous.

On the sofa lay a dying man and a boy about two years old by his side. . . . I never spoke a word, and on seeing M[aria] home, returned to the house and stood outside in hopes she would appear at the windows.

I went home, and for the first time in my life was really, heartily, thoroughly, passionately over head and ears and heart in love. I hated my pictures. I hated the Elgin Marbles. I hated books. I could not eat, or sleep,

or think, or write, or talk. I got up early; examined the premises and street, and gave a man half-a-crown to let me sit concealed and watch for her coming out. Day after day I grew more and more inextricably enraptured till resistance was relinquished with a glorious defiance of restraint. Her conduct to her dying husband, her gentle reproof of my impassioned and unrestrained air, riveted my being.

Although he had been a bankrupt, Simon Hyman left his widow an annual income of £52, 10s. This and her two sons, Orlando, seven, and Simon, an infant, were her dowry.

The *London Magazine* for November announced the marriage: "Oct. 10. At Mary-le-bone Church, B. R. Haydon, Esq. historical painter, to Mrs. Hyman [*sic*], of Stonehouse, Devonshire."

Mary Hyman, a Jewess, was twenty-eight, seven years Haydon's junior. She was described as "a most beautiful woman, just like the Rebecca of 'Ivanhoe'"; and Mary Russell Mitford, who became very fond of her and befriended her when the final tragedy struck, wrote to a friend after their first meeting: "She is really a charming woman—splendidly beautiful. I never saw so fine a piece of natural coloring as that formed by her dark eyes and hair, and her brilliant complexion—and with exceedingly sweet and captivating manners."

Charles Locke Eastlake, writing to Haydon from Rome four years later, also paid tribute to Mary Haydon's beauty: "I am glad Mrs. Haydon has not forgotten her sitting to me. Her handsome face in my painting-room (however poorly imitated by me) was the means of getting me many portraits. What an advantage for you to 'use your eyes,' as you used to say, to such a countenance." Eric George has identified the lovely profile at the extreme right of *The Raising of Lazarus* as that of Mary Haydon.

There are hints in such portions of Haydon's journals as we have been allowed to read that he may have had a weakness for the ladies in his younger days, but it is evident that after his marriage he remained a loyal and devoted husband. His relations with Mrs. Caroline Norton, commented on elsewhere in this volume, were almost certainly in no wise discreditable to him. In his marriage, Haydon was ecstatically happy, as his letters to Miss Mitford, during the honeymoon at Windsor and afterward, show. And events proved that he had chosen wisely; for Mary Haydon stood by him

most loyally through it all, affording him a never-failing oasis of love and comfort in the midst of despair.

The marriage was eminently happy, but it introduced additional financial complications which were disastrous. For one thing, the painter was exceedingly fond of children and was opposed to any semblance of birth control. Miss Mitford, who was a bit of a blue-stocking, was an advocate of the "prudential check": he wrote her on December 6, 1825:

You have such a horror, a Malthusian horror of the increase of population, that I dread to write we have been guilty here of that abominable crime—of bringing another little snoozling rogue into being. . . . I think myself lucky she had not twins, for I dreaded it most abominably.

You say you cannot account for the weakness of people having more children than they can maintain. Stay, my dear lady, till you marry some one you passionately love, and then you will easily understand the secret. . . .

I differ from you, though I feel diffident of saying more to a lady on such a delicate subject, but be assured there is more courage in taking the chance of a large family, as a man ought, than in the morbid, fidgety apprehensiveness attending always the reverse. . . . Burn Malthus, read Milton and Shakespeare, and believe me that population and prosperity go together.

But notwithstanding his optimism, it is clear that Haydon allowed his family to increase out of all proportion to his ability to maintain it. It is difficult to be certain of the exact number of his children. Five of the younger ones, however, died with awful regularity between 1831 and 1836. Three survived him; each had an unhappy end.

Although irascible on occasions, Haydon was an enthusiastic husband and an affectionate and self-sacrificing father; but before many years had passed, he found it impossible to manage his career or take care of his family as he wished.

About a month after his marriage, on November 12, 1821, Haydon, for the second time that year, found himself in difficulty. This time he was arrested for a debt of £66 to Rennell, a printer. Having apparently exhausted his other sources of emergency aid, he thought of Wilkie and persuaded the Sheriff's-officer to drive him out in his gig to Phillimore Place, Kensington, to see if his old friend would help him.

Since their visit to France together in 1814, Haydon and Wilkie



had seen little of each other. For one thing, Wilkie, a member of the Royal Academy since 1811, found conversation with a professed and vehement Academy-hater difficult and embarrassing. For another, their ideals of art were so antipathetic that, except for reminiscences of their early struggles, they had little in common to talk about.

On this occasion, Wilkie, who was described by one of his friends as "prudent" rather than stingy, was exceedingly reluctant to oblige. Rather than see Haydon go to gaol, however, he finally agreed to be responsible for half his bail. He exacted solemn promises from Haydon that he would obtain another endorser to assume the other half, that he would make every effort to discharge the debt, and that he would not leave town until he had done so. Shortly after he had obtained Wilkie's signature and left with the officer, Haydon, evidently smarting under the ignominious conditions which he felt Wilkie had imposed, wrote his friend a "very unbecoming" letter, "filled with upbraidings, promises, and threats." And when Wilkie, that same afternoon, called upon Mr. Perkins, who was to have been the other endorser, he discovered that Perkins had been out when Haydon had called. It was all too apparent to Wilkie, then, that he alone was security for the payment of the £66. This he did not relish, nor did he approve of Haydon's high-handedness. "Haydon's conduct on this occasion," he wrote in his journal, "appears strikingly offensive, and brings me to the determination of giving up his acquaintance." Wilkie never quite did that, but they saw even less of each other thereafter. With his demands for absolute loyalty Haydon was a difficult friend.

Late in the fall, accompanied by William Harvey, he journeyed to Edinburgh to exhibit a number of his pictures and drawings along with some of his students' works. His advertisement appeared in *The Scotsman, or Edinburgh Political and Literary Journal* on November 24, 1821:

MR. HAYDON'S PICTURES of SOLOMON, DENTATUS, CHRIST'S AGONY, ROMEO and JULIET, with all his Drawings from Nature and the Elgin Marbles, OPEN THIS DAY at Bruse's Rooms, Waterloo Place. Admittance, 1s.—Catalogue, 6d.—Tickets for the season, 5s.

The same number of *The Scotsman* contained a long review of the

exhibition, in the main favorable, although the writer seemed to prefer the *Jerusalem* which had been shown the year before. A correspondent to *Blackwood's Magazine* also praised the exhibition, in particular *Christ's Agony* which he held had been "unjustly deprecated." He even found Haydon's self-advertising in the descriptive catalogue and elsewhere no more than a "manly self-confidence . . . not only becoming but necessary."

The pictures remained on exhibition until February 16, 1822, at which time *The Scotsman* announced that they were to be removed to Glasgow. It is doubtful that this was done: the exhibition had not been profitable.

During 1822, Haydon worked steadily ahead on *The Raising of Lazarus* and completed it on December 17. This painting, now in the Tate Gallery, *The Judgment of Solomon*, and *Christ's Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem* are considered the best of Haydon's historical paintings. It is obvious that modern taste and criticism no longer relish or enjoy painting in this grand style. But it is at least conceivable that a comparable genre, the modern fresco with its grandiose allegory and sprawling potpourri of realism and symbolism may, in the space of a half-century or so, become as quaint and obsolete as the High Raphaelesque Art practiced by West and Haydon.

*Lazarus*, in any event, was well received by both the critics and the public.<sup>2</sup> The head was especially admired, Sir Walter Scott calling it "that most appalling conception ever realized on canvas." Bewick, writing Tom Taylor in 1853, recalled his experience sitting for it:

I remember well that I was seated upon a box, placed upon a chair upon a table, mounted up as high as the head in the picture—and a very tottering insecure seat it was—and painful, to be pinned to a confined spot for so many hours. . . . I think I see the painter before me—his palette and

<sup>2</sup>One modern critic, A. C. Sewter, has said kind things regarding the painting: "The comparison with Sebastiano del Piombo's *Lazarus* [which Haydon had in mind when he painted his] . . . would probably lead to a close finish, with Haydon perhaps even winning by a head." Mr. Sewter calls the head of the apostle nearest Lazarus "a real masterpiece," the old lady near the right hand edge "ultimately and sympathetically seen." The fleeing gravediggers in the left foreground are, however, grossly exaggerated. Other critics have found serious fault with the Christ, especially the woodenness of his upraised arm and his insipid expression.

brushes in his left hand—returning from the sheriff's officer in the adjoining room—pale, calm and serious; no agitation—mounting his high steps and continuing his arduous task; and, as he looks round to his pallid model, half breathingly whispering, "Egad, [Bewick]! I have just been arrested: that is the *third* time; if they come again, I shall not be able to go on." He soon seemed absorbed in his subject and to forget his arrest in the intensity of the effort to create so extraordinary an embodiment. After he had worked in the head he stood aghast before it, exclaiming, "I've hit it now!—I've hit it!" By the time the two hands and figure were completed he was exhausted; and, for myself, I seemed as dead as Lazarus was—no circulation, stiff as death. He laughed and joked, and helped me down from my "high estate"; and a cup of warm tea refreshed and resuscitated as cadaverous a Lazarus as the painter could have wished for.

The year 1822 was one of great happiness for Haydon. Marriage was agreeing with him. As he put it: "Matrimony has restored the purity of my mind. I have no vice to reproach myself with this whole year." On December 12, his first son, Frank Scott Haydon, was born; his cup indeed seemed to be running over.

Of course this year, like most, had been marred by threats of arrests and executions; many working hours had been wasted in satisfying creditors. But it was not until the following year that the blow fell. His exhibition of *Lazarus* during March and April 1823, had been successful, but he had failed to find a purchaser. The success of the exhibition evidently whetted his creditors' appetites, for on April 13 an execution was put in on the painting. On the 21st Haydon was arrested and taken to King's Bench Prison; his property was seized and advertised for sale.

King's Bench Prison, primarily for debtors and anyone sentenced by the Court of King's Bench, stood at the southwest corner of Blackman Street, in the road to the Obelisk, St. George's Fields. It was surrounded by a very high wall, but those prisoners who could afford to pay for the privilege were allowed to walk through Blackman Street and in St. George's Fields. In Haydon's time it was considered more comfortable than other debtors' prisons, although decent accommodations there were somewhat more expensive. During his confinement Haydon received many consoling letters, including a fine one from Sir Walter Scott, to whom he had written a detailed account of the events leading up to his arrest. A few of

his friends sent contributions of money which helped him to pay his expenses at the prison. Mary came to visit him and spent many of her days there, and it seems likely that their second child, a daughter Mary, born March 3, 1824, was conceived during Haydon's imprisonment.

When the painter's property was put up for sale, Dr. George Darling, his physician and faithful friend, Sir George Beaumont, and Wilkie, among others, bought in many of his casts, prints, and painting materials in order that he might have the equipment which he would need in order to resume painting after his release. *Jerusalem* and *Lazarus* were sold to creditors: *Jerusalem* for £240, *Lazarus* for £300 to Binns, his upholsterer.

His trial came on July 23. For all his agony of spirit, he saw the scene with a painter's eye, and recorded it vividly:

There is something in a court of justice deeply affecting. The grave, good look of the robed judges, the pertinacious ferreting air of the counsel, the eager listening faces of the spectators, the prisoner standing up like a soul in purgatory.

At last up rose a grave, black-robed man, and said in a loud voice, "Benjamin Robert Haydon! Does anyone appear? Benjamin Robert Haydon!"

Nobody came, and I mounted. My heart beat violently. I put my clenched hand on the platform where the judges sat, and hung the other over my hat. There was a dead silence: then I heard pens moving; then there was a great buzz. I feared to look about. At last I turned my head right facing the spectators. First, the whole row of counsellors were looking like ferrets, knitting their brows, and turning their legal faces up to me with a half-piercing, half-amusing stare. I saw nothing behind but faces, front and profile, staring with all their soul. Startled a little, I turned, and caught both judges with their glasses off, darting their eyes with a sort of interest. I felt extremely agitated. My heart swelled. My chest hove up, and I gave a sigh from my very soul. I was honourably acquitted, bowed low and retired. . . .

Out of one hundred and fifty creditors not one opposed me. One, a villain, entered his name, but lost courage. I consider this an ordeal that has tried my character, and I feel grateful for it.

I am now free to begin life again. God protect me and grant that I may yet accomplish my great object.

Any detailed description of Haydon's finances during the last twenty-three years of his life would be painful and involved and not especially profitable. Receipts from his paintings and exhibi-

tions were frequently large, probably averaging between £750 and £1,000 yearly; but the expenses of historical painting as he practiced it were great, and ruinous financiering kept him never far from the brink. In his balance-sheet filed in the insolvency proceedings in 1830, he attributed his condition to "Heavy rent; want of adequate employment; law expenses, and a large family"; in 1836 to "heavy law costs, to the loss sustained by the exhibition of Earl Grey's picture, and to having been attacked by *Fraser's Magazine*." Whatever the causes, Haydon, from 1823 to his death, was never free from difficulty. Too often matters got entirely out of hand. During this twenty-three year period, his journals record no less than ten executions and arrests. Four times he was confined in debtors' prison: in 1823, 1827, 1830, and 1836. Seldom has an habitual bankrupt had such loyal friends, but their aid in his various crises never gave him more than temporary relief. At the time of his death his debts were in excess of £3,000; his assets were insignificant.

When Haydon came out of prison, his first impulse was to return to his gutted house and throw his energies into the painting of his colossal *Crucifixion*, a picture, never completed, which he had begun on March 7, shortly before his imprisonment. But the humiliation of his gaol experience and consideration of the awful plight of his family induced him for once to face reality. Frederic Haydon blames Mary Haydon, his mother, for this weakening of the painter's resolution: "It was weak—oh, very weak—but there are points in which women fail us." Haydon himself, in the years that followed, evidently felt that he had disgraced himself by his failure to carry out this high design. About 1829 he wrote, in connection with what his son describes as an earlier autobiography, then in progress:

Shortly after the 'Lazarus' was finished this remarkable man, B. R. Haydon, died. He always said it would be his last great work. Another, John Haydon, painted in imitation of the former a few small works; but *he* was a married man—had five children—sent his pictures to the Academy, asked a patron or two to employ him, and, in short, did all those things that men must do who prefer their own degradation to the starvation of their children.

They took temporary lodgings near Paddington Church, and

Haydon turned to the painting of small and more readily salable pictures, chiefly portraits when he could find sitters, in order to support himself and his family. There were moments when he was almost ready to concede that portrait painting did after all require a certain technical skill, that even a historical painter might perhaps learn something of value from this otherwise sordid interlude in his great career. But in the main he hated it and considered it degrading and paltry. He did, however, recognize the inescapable facts: "My devotion to historical painting has plunged me into vast debts. Portraits and success are my only chance of paying them."

But sitters were few, and the end of the year found him still pawning things for bread and rent, "in consequence of the bullying insolence of a short, wicked-eyed, wrinkled, waddling, gin-drinking, dirty-ruffled landlady—a poor old bit of asthmatic humanity! As I was finishing the faun's foot [in *Silenus*] in she bounced and demanded the four pounds with the air of an old demirep duchess. . . . Fielding should have seen the old devil!"

In January 1824, aided by the friends who had bought in some of his furniture and painting materials at the insolvency sale, he took a lease on a house near the Marble Arch at 58 Connaught Terrace, Edgware Road, and prepared to move. When the time came, however, the "two old reptiles with whom we lived . . . put a destraint for £4, 10s. after we paid them £46. Such is human justice!" By February 6th, however, they were settled in their new home.

Haydon's address from 1824 onward is variously given, but according to Frank Scott Haydon, who was eleven years old at the time, the Haydons occupied this same house from 1824 to 1846. William Newton, their new landlord, was so fabulously considerate and generous during the trying years that followed that, as Edmund Blunden happily puts it, he "ought to be in the *Dictionary of National Biography* as a Landlord."

On March 28, Haydon dined with Thomas Barnes of the *Times* in Great Surrey Street, and there he met Thomas Moore, poet and friend of Byron, with whom he had a slight acquaintance. Later in the spring he met the poet again at Lord Stafford's. It was on this occasion that Hazlitt, who had attacked Moore in print, expressed to Haydon the fear that Moore might challenge him.

Portrait painting occupied most of Haydon's time during the year, together with some early attempts at historical genre. His cabinet size *Silenus, intoxicated and moral, reproving Bacchus and Ariadne on their lazy and irregular lives* remained unsold until late in the year, at which time it went, Haydon says, for "half price," in this case £150. A painting of a similar nature, *Puck bringing the Ass's Head for Bottom*, in 1823, had brought only £20 from Thomas Kearsey, Haydon's lawyer. In May, on a commission from John Hunter, a wealthy city man, he had also begun *Pharaoh dismissing Moses at the Dead of Night, after the Passover*, a large picture, 102 by 88 inches. This picture, which Thomas Campbell had seen and praised in Haydon's painting room, was completed in January 1826 and sent to the British Gallery. But England was entering a five-year period of business depression: Hunter was unable to pay for the picture he had ordered, and Haydon was left with a large, unsaleable picture on his hands.<sup>3</sup> The loss of £500, the price agreed upon, was a body blow. Because of the depression, Haydon was finding it increasingly difficult to borrow the money he relied upon to keep going from day to day. His financial condition continued to deteriorate.

In October, however, the skies brightened for a moment in a surprising and unexpected quarter. As dictated by hard, practical circumstances, Haydon had already committed himself to his "portrait career," although hating and despising it from the depths of his being. Now his attorney, Thomas Kearsey, who had represented him during his insolvency the previous year and who had, by all accounts, shrewdly salvaged what he could for Haydon from the wreckage, came forward with a plan. Kearsey's proposition was more than a disinterested offer of financial assistance, although it was that. In return for financial support to the extent of £300 during the year 1825, he laid down an exact regimen to which the painter must conform, under oath. This plan made the following stipulations:

1. A standard minimum price was to be established for portraits

<sup>3</sup> This picture is now, I have been informed, in the Chapel of Youth in Paisley Abbey, where it is known as *Death of the First-Born*.

of various sizes, from 75 guineas for whole lengths to 30 or 35 guineas for half lengths. "You will paint portraits to your best skill at the above prices when they offer, and you will try to get them. You will paint no portrait at less price unless I assent. . . ."

2. When not engaged in portrait painting, Haydon was to keep busy painting "historic or compositions of fancy, of a small, or at most not larger than a saleable cabinet size." He had also to consult Kearsley about his projects.

3. In return for the support offered, Haydon was to pledge his honor that he would make no further requests of his benefactor at any future time, in order that Kearsley might not have his "feelings harrowed." Any advances made under the plan would bear interest at 4 per cent and be secured by Haydon's bond and a life insurance, in addition to the paintings remaining unsold.

Haydon, perforce, accepted these conditions. Perhaps as a result, 1825 was a relatively quiet and productive year. Haydon's portrait career lasted about two years, extending into 1826. His paintings during this period include, in addition to those already mentioned, the cabinet size historical genre *Juliet at the Balcony*, and portraits, among others, of Alderman Hawkes, Late Mayor of Norwich; Mrs. Hawkes; Dr. George Darling; Dr. Thomas Alcock, a London surgeon; and Mary Russell Mitford.<sup>4</sup>

Miss Mitford, it will be remembered, had first seen the painter in 1814 while visiting the exhibition of *Solomon*. When they finally met, in 1817, she approached him with respect and awe; and as time went on, her high opinion of him increased.

In September, shortly after his release from King's Bench, she rejoined the applauding procession of those who from time to time strewed Haydon's rugged path with sonnets:<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup>This portrait of Alderman Hawkes is the one referred to in George Borrow's satirical characterization of Haydon in Chapter 38 of *Lavengro*. So far as I have been able to learn, it is still displayed at St. Andrew's Hall, Norwich. John Borrow, elder brother of George, had come up to London from Norwich in 1821 to study under Haydon, and remained under his instruction for over a year. It was he who had been asked to paint the ex-mayor's portrait for a fee of 100 guineas; but lacking confidence in his abilities, he came to London and persuaded Haydon to do it.

<sup>5</sup>Her earlier sonnet, "To Mr. Haydon: On a Study from Nature" (1817) has previously been mentioned.



Haydon! this dull age and this northern clime  
 Are all unripe for thee! Thou shouldst have been  
 Born 'midst the Angelos and Raphaels, seen  
 By the Merchant Prince of Florence, sent to climb  
 The flowery steep of art, in art's young prime,  
 By Leo. Of those master spirits thou  
 Art one: a greater never wreathed his brow  
 With laurels gathered in the field of time.  
 And thine own hour shall come, the joyful hour  
 Of triumph bravely won through toil and blame,  
 Courage and constancy and the soaring power  
 Of genius plumed by love. Then shall thy name  
 Sound gloriously amid the golden shower  
 Of fortune, crowned and sanctified by Fame.

And in 1824, she wrote to Rev. William Harness:

Haydon is a creature of air and fire; the frankest, truest man breathing; absolutely free from pretense and trickery. There are three moderate wishes I should like to see realized; you—a bishop . . .; Mr. Talfourd—Attorney General; and Mr. Haydon—President of the Royal Academy.

The portrait which Haydon painted for Miss Mitford in 1825 as a gesture of friendship resulted in some disillusionment, and she lost some of the breathlessness of her earlier hero-worship. On May 21, 1825, she wrote to Sir William Elford expressing her disappointment in the portrait, and after warning her correspondent not to repeat her remarks she added:

I would not have Mr. Haydon know it for worlds. It was a present, in the first place, and certainly a kind and flattering attention; and, in the second, my personal feelings for him would always make the picture gratifying to me for his sake were it as ugly as Medusa. He is a most admirable person, whose very faults spring from that excess of brilliancy and life with which, more than any creature that ever lived, he is gifted. I never see him without thinking of the Dauphin's horse in "Henry the Fifth"—all air and fire—the duller elements have no share in his composition.

In 1829 the portrait, which by this time Miss Mitford was privately referring to as a "caricature," caused further irritation. She had discovered a new artist, John Lucas, a young man, who desired to paint her portrait. Haydon apparently acceded with good grace, but his subsequent actions showed pettiness of spirit, and Miss

Mitford was further disappointed in him. Lucas, who later specialized in portraits of ladies, succeeded in painting a tactful and pleasing likeness. Miss Mitford, who was no beauty, commented that she had never seen "a more lady-like picture." Many years later, in 1852, she wrote James T. Fields that Lucas was "not only the finest portrait-painter, but about the very finest mind I know in the world."

Her correspondence with Haydon lagged between 1831 and 1841. She was much taken with the charms and merits of Lucas, twenty years her junior. In a letter to Miss Elizabeth Barrett, of Wimpole Street, in 1836, she spoke of Haydon's "vivacity and good spirits."

Those high animal spirits [she continued,] are a gift from heaven, and frequently pass for genius; or rather make talent pass for genius—silver gilded. Mr. Lucas is of a far higher and purer stamp. There is no gilding there; it is the true metal and without alloy. . . . I love John Lucas. His wife I have never seen.

During 1841 and 1842 a few more letters were exchanged; but by that time little remained of Haydon's *joie de vivre*, and Miss Mitford's illusions about her friend had largely been dissipated. The last records of their friendship are to be found in her shocked comments at the time of the painter's suicide, her concern over the poverty of his family and her efforts in their behalf, and the remarks in her letters regarding his correspondence and the publication of Taylor's *Life*.

Another and even more loyal friend of Haydon's later years, whose portrait he painted in 1827, was Thomas Noon Talfourd—lawyer, politician, dramatist, and judge. Talfourd was well acquainted with Miss Mitford, but he was especially intimate with Lamb: his *Final Memorials of Charles Lamb*, published in 1848, is a fine and sensitive appreciation of Elia and his friends, including Haydon.

Talfourd and Haydon met from time to time and seemed to enjoy each other's company. "There was never such a delightful fellow," the painter wrote Miss Mitford on November 19, 1827: "no cant, and he likes a glass of good old port as well as myself. I was so much pleased with Talfourd and his wine, and they seemed

so much pleased with me, that we may fairly say for four hours yesterday the bad passions of human nature—in one company at least—were utterly forgotten. . . .” It was at Talfourd’s that Henry Crabb Robinson met Haydon for the third time, on December 10, 1824. Charles Lamb and his sister were there, and Mrs. Haydon and Miss Mitford. A month later, at the time of the Kean Riots, Haydon met Talfourd by chance in the audience at Drury Lane, and the lawyer took his friend behind the scenes.

Edmund Kean, the tragedian, was appearing as Richard III, at a time when scandalous tales were abroad regarding his relations with a married woman of some consequence. He was given an uproarious reception, and Haydon, remembering the O. P. Riots of 1809, was delighted to be in the midst of it. “Kean,” he reported to Miss Mitford, “was agitated, and at intervals kept drinking brandy and water.” Haydon, who had admired Kean’s acting in the past, “could not help shaking his hand as he came off, though I disapprove his conduct. . . . Talfourd said he could not have shaken his hand. Perhaps he was right. But I could not resist [t]his action; besides, he was irritated at the howling of a palpable set of touters.”

In a later reminiscence, written in 1847, Crabb Robinson said of Talfourd: “[He] is a generous and kind-hearted man. To men of letters and artists in distress, such as Leigh Hunt, Haydon, &c., he was always very liberal.” And the scanty references to him in Haydon’s journals and correspondence seem to bear out this statement. Talfourd, at any rate, was one of the three executors named by Haydon in his will.

A visit to the home of Sir John Soane, R.A., made memorable the evening of March 27, 1825. Soane, the architect, who had amassed a fortune, was an avid collector and delighted in displaying his home and his possessions to the notable and the great. Haydon wrote Miss Mitford:

I was at Soane’s last night to see this sarcophagus by lamp-light. The first person I met, after seventeen years, was Coleridge, silver-haired! He looked at my bald front, and I at his hair, with mutual looks of sympathy and mutual head-shaking. It affected me very much, and so it seemed to affect him. I did not know what to say, nor did he; and then in his chanting way,

half-poetical, half-inspired, half-idiotic, he began to console me by trying to prove that the only way for a man of genius to be happy was just to put forth no more power than was sufficient for the purposes of the age in which he lived, as if genius was a power one could fold up like a parasol!

At this moment over came Spurzheim [the phrenologist], with his German simplicity, and shaking my hand: "How doe you doe? Vy, your organs are more parfaite den eaver. How luckee you lose your hair. Veel you pearmeet me to eintrowdooze you to Mrs. Spurzheim?" I was pushed against Turner, the landscape painter, with his red face and white waistcoat, and before I could see Mrs. Spurzheim, was carried off my legs, and irretrievably hustled to where the sarcophagus lay.

Soane's house is a perfect Cretan labyrinth: curious narrow staircases, landing places, balconies, spring doors, and little rooms filled with fragments to the very ceiling. It was the finest fun imaginable to see the people come in to the library after wandering about below, amidst tombs and capitals, and shafts, and noiseless heads, with a sort of expression of delighted relief at finding themselves again among the living, and with coffee and cake! They looked as if they were pleased to feel their blood circulate once more, and went smirking up to Soane, "lui faisant leurs compliments," with a twisting chuckle of features as if grateful for their escape. Fancy delicate ladies of fashion dipping their pretty heads into an old mouldy, fusty, hieroglyphicked coffin, blessing their stars at its age, wondering whom it contained, and whispering that it was mentioned in Pliny. You can imagine the associations connected with such contrasts.

Just as I was beginning to meditate, the Duke of Sussex, with a star on his breast, and an asthma inside it, came squeezing and wheezing along the narrow passage, driving all the women before him like a Blue-Beard, and putting his royal head into the coffin, adding his wonder to the wonder of the rest. Upstairs stood Soane, spare, thin, caustic, and starched, "mocking the thing he laughed at," as he smiled approbation for the praises bestowed on his magnificent house. . . .

Coleridge said, "I have a great contempt for these Egyptians with all their learning. After all, what did it amount to, but a bad system of astronomy?"

"What do you think of this house, Mr. Haydon?" said that dandy ——— to me. "Very interesting," I said. "Very interesting," he replied, with a sparkle in his eye denoting an occult meaning he was too polite to express. "Very curious, is it not?" "Very curious," I echoed. "Very kind of Mr. Soane to open the house so." "Very kind," I replied, as grave as the Chancellor, seeing that he was dying to say something which would come out if I pretended ignorance. "Rather odd, though, stuck about so." I smiled. "However it is very kind of Soane, you know, but it's a funny house, and a ——" Just then, Soane was elbowed against him, and both made elegant bows to each other, —— expressed his thanks to Soane for "admitting him

to the enjoyment of such a splendid treat," &c., &c.—and went off with Soane downstairs, talking of the Egyptians with all the solemnity of deep learning and of a profound interest in his subject.

As I looked at Soane, smiling and flushed by flattery, I thought of Johnson at Ranelagh. "There was not a soul then around him who would not, ere they put on their night-caps, envy him his assemblage of rank, and talent, and fashion; sneer at his antiques, quiz his coffee, and go to sleep, pitying with affected superiority his delusion and vanity." But Soane is a good though caustic man. . . . And now I must go and paint the carpet my sitter stands on; so adieu to human nature, and let me paint with all my power the colour and texture of a Brussels bit.

If we accept his remarks at face value, Haydon had very slight regard for his portraits. He exhibited a number of them at the first annual exhibition of the Society of British Artists at its gallery in Suffolk Street, Pall Mall East, in 1824, and in 1825; but both his critics and his friends found little in them to praise or to admire. A writer in *Fraser's* later described them as "colossal caricatures of the ugliest people catchable"; and L'Estrange complained that in the Mitford portrait "everything was larger than life. It represented a Brobdingnagian fat woman seated in a bower of Brobdingnagian honeysuckles."

His worst fault, perhaps, was his unwillingness or inability to flatter his subjects; and recognizing this, he was bitter in his denunciation of the successful portrait painters who in such large measure made up the membership of the Royal Academy. It was impossible, he insisted, to be a fashionable portrait painter and maintain one's integrity:

In historical painting every hour's progress is an accession of knowledge; the mind never flags, but is kept in one delicious tone of meditation and fancy: whereas, in portrait one sitter, stupid as ribs of beef, goes; another comes, a third follows. Women screw up their mouths to make them look pretty, and men suck their lips to make them look red. Then the trash one is obliged to talk! The stuff one is obliged to copy! The fidgets that are obliged to be borne! . . . They want me to perfume them, like Lawrence, and this I will not do. . . . I must paint a face as *I* see it, not as you wish others to see it.

It is curious that of all his pictures a handful of portraits seem the ones most likely to endure. The modern viewer can find real pleasure in the chalk drawing of the strong, ugly head of Words-

worth which Haydon did in 1818, and the portraits of Hunt, Wordsworth, and himself now in the National Portrait Gallery. The portrait heads of Wordsworth, Hazlitt, and Keats introduced into *Jerusalem* are the only features of that colossal wreck which are of any interest today. And Haydon's profile of Keats, sketched from life in the painter's journals, is to a modern student perhaps the most convincing and satisfactory representation of the poet, certainly superior to the saccharine heads done by Hilton and Severn.

In April, shortly before his arrest, Haydon had planned to petition the House of Commons regarding the public employment of artists. He talked with Lord Brougham about the matter and obtained his support, but before any action could be taken, Haydon was in gaol. This did not discourage his efforts, however, and while the painter was still in King's Bench Prison, Brougham presented his petition to the House.

In it, Haydon urged that Parliament should advance and encourage historical painting in England by "the purchase and presentation of pictures to adorn the altars of churches and the sides of public halls, and [by] the employment of artists of distinguished reputation to produce them." He argued that since Commons had been subsidizing both sculpture and architecture and was currently engaged in the erection of many new churches, the time for government support of painting was at hand. He cited himself and his own desperate plight as an example of the inadequacy of the system of private patronage to support historical painters who, he declared, had "rescued their country from the stigma of incapacity which so long hung over it in the opinion of foreign nations."

This petition, needless to say, had no success, nor had any of those he subsequently presented. One of Haydon's most persistent delusions was that the government could be persuaded to subsidize a national art, and there were few years in which he did not present further petitions to Parliament, or by correspondence and personal appeals attempt to influence public men and politicians in favor of his projects. At various times he importuned Lord Morpeth, Lord Mulgrave, Percival, Castlereagh, Canning, the Duke of Wellington, Sir Charles Long, Lord Grey, Melbourne, and Sir Robert Peel—among others—for their support of the principles he so passionately advocated.

In addition to government employment and purchases, Haydon agitated for the decoration of public buildings—specifically churches, the Admiralty, and the Houses of Parliament—a National School of Design, a National Gallery, and Professorships of Art at the Universities. He also believed that the British public could be aroused about these matters and their opinion brought to bear. Of the numerous pamphlets which he published from time to time at least four were addressed to laymen with this object in view.

That most of Haydon's projects, in one form or another, were ultimately carried out benefited him not in the least. But it seems likely that his almost continuous agitation in their behalf may have prepared for the concept of the social nature of art so vigorously advanced by Ruskin and Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites later in the century.

In 1826, after many soul-searchings and battles with his pride, Haydon determined to try to make his peace with the Royal Academy. In doing this he was following the advice of several of his influential well-wishers. His gaol experience had evidently half persuaded him that it was time to settle down and become respectable. After all, he consoled himself,

The Academy is not what it was when I attacked it. I consider it materially modified, and why should I keep up a senseless hostility for the sake of gratifying the malignant and discontented, who have clapped their hands while I have been the victim? The party that expelled Reynolds and brought the Academy into contempt is dead and powerless. This party I attacked and successfully. Young men of talent have been admitted, and its whole state and condition is improved.

In May, as a first step, he sent his *Venus appearing to Anchises*, a cabinet picture, to the Academy Exhibition where it was well hung and well received. In July he undertook the next step toward healing the breach: he commenced a round of conciliatory calls upon the Academicians: Westmacott, Calcott, Shee, Flaxman, Chantrey, Beechey, Westall, Bailey, Thompson, Ward, Howard, Soane, Stothard, Phillips, Bone, Cooper, and Lawrence—he saw them all.

At times he was pleased at the kindness of his reception; at other times his gorge rose. "I'll bet my existence I shall never have the patience to go through." Go through he did, but try as he would

he could not always repress his true feelings. When he viewed Westmacott's new equestrian statue of George III he could not resist hinting "certain deficiencies" in the form of the horse. Too often he argued with the Academicians in defense of his former violence. He could not forget that he had once "made them all tremble, and this they remember well. And, by heavens, my calling makes them tremble still." When Shee, who four years later became President of the Royal Academy, remarked to Haydon that "Portrait painters . . . when they paint history, beat the historical painters," the painter boiled inwardly, "but good breeding rendered it necessary to bow." Later, in his journal, he could vent his anger: "This is a specimen of the sort of family trash and namby-pamby that is the circulating medium of the Academy. It makes me sick."

He realized the slimness of his chances. "I cannot expect to be received with open arms at once after the severity with which I have treated these men. . . . But no concession; d—— me if I make any concession. I'll be patient, and give them three years. If at the end of that time I am trifled with, then to hostilities again."

Haydon put his name down as a candidate in 1826 and again in 1827. He did not receive a single vote. And thirteen years later the blow that his pride had received still rankled, for in 1839, at the head of the July 10, 1826 entry in his journal, he wrote, "This is the disgrace of my life."

Many questions regarding Haydon's finances are, and at this distance must remain, matters of wonder and bafflement. One can never quite make out, for example, exactly how much financial support Haydon received during his lifetime from the noble and the wealthy. Both the painter and his son Frederic, the latter with some bitterness, complain that it was not enough; but a reader of the journals cannot help being impressed by the number of Haydon's wealthy acquaintances and the frequency and at times apparent generosity with which, especially during his later years, they came forward to his aid. Unfortunately their assistance invariably came after the damage was irreparable, too late to effect any permanent improvement.

Of the patrons of the period, the Earl of Egremont has been described as the "most munificent" and "least ostentatious nobleman in England." A bachelor of immense wealth, thought by many



to be the father of Lord Melbourne, the future Prime Minister, and his sister Lady Palmerston, he had for many years devoted himself to the acquisition of contemporary works. At his death in 1837, his collection of modern art comprised 170 pictures and 21 sculptures, which he had for the most part commissioned or purchased directly from contemporary artists.

Up to this time Haydon had had no dealings with him; but now, hard at work on *Alexander taming Bucephalus*, "the finest subject on earth," and as usual pressed for funds to continue, he wrote Lord Egremont explaining his distress.

John Edward Carew, the sculptor, who was being patronized by Egremont at this time, was a neighbor of Haydon's in Connaught Terrace. He reported to Haydon the effect of his letter:<sup>6</sup>

Carew was at breakfast with Lord Egremont. "What bedevilment has Haydon got into now?"

"None, my Lord. He has lost commissions he relied on, and of course, having a wife and five children, he is anxious they should not starve."

"Well, well, I'll call on you to-morrow, at three, and then go over to him at half-past."

Lord Egremont called accordingly at Carew's; we saw him get out of his carriage, and go into the house. Dear Mary and I were walking on the leads, and agreed it would not be quite right to look too happy, being without sixpence: so we came in, I to the parlour to peep through the blinds, and she to the nursery.

In about ten minutes I saw a bustle with the servants. Lord Egremont came out of Carew's, buttoned his coat and crossed over. He came in, and walked up.

"I hope my Lord, I have not lost your esteem by making my situation known to you?"

"Not at all," said he; "I shall be happy to assist you." He looked at Alexander, and said: "I should like this. You must go on with it, and I shall call up occasionally."

He came down, and went away smiling as if pleased with his own resolution.

Carew said before he came over he talked of me the whole time. "What mess is this?"

Carew repeated the facts.

"Is he extravagant?"

"Not in the least, my Lord; he is domestic, economical and indefatigable."

"Why did he take that house after his misfortunes?"

"I have taken liberties with Haydon's paragraphing."

"Because the light was good, and he is at less rent than in a furnished lodging."

"Well, I must go over, and do something.—But why did he write [against the Academicians]?"

"My Lord, he was a very young man, and I believe he sincerely repents."

"He has made himself enemies everywhere by his writing," said he.

He told Carew he thought Alexander the very thing, the cleverest picture I had conceived. It is decidedly so, I know. God only grant me health and peace to bring it to a grand and triumphant conclusion, and to make so generous a nobleman my lasting friend.

With his usual thoroughness, Haydon had been devoting long hours to anatomical studies and research into the historical and literary background for his picture. Now, through the good offices of his new patron, he was enabled to make careful studies of the action of man and horse at the riding school in St. John's Wood. The Colonel in command provided him with his pick of subjects.

First of all—the lifeguardsman, a fine young man, stripped his limbs and mounted: he then rode his horse fiercely at gallop till he was winded; he then drew him up, as he passed me, and halted him to a stand, at the supposed distance the King in the picture would stand from my position in the riding-school. By repeating this several times, and passing me at gallop and trot, I observed narrowly the agreeing action of hind and fore quarters, the neck, when pulled in, as well as the expression of ears, mouth, eye and nostrils.

The Colonel then himself galloped a grey mare of his own round, pulled in, and I sketched the nostrils of the mare, whilst breathing hard, to get the shape and character. After making one finished sketch in chalk of man and horse, besides several others, and the action and expression of the horse being approved by competent judges in the school, I was allowed to have both man and horse to my house; and the horse, though mettled, being drilled and obedient, walked into my house like a dog, and he and the man stood in my parlour six hours whilst I made an oil sketch of both. The man and horse were then taken to a meadow behind my house, and the horse raced in it till exhausted, and at full speed pulled suddenly up. Having thus made myself master, from nature only, of the action and expression wanted, I painted the man and horse into the picture, and retouched both from life again in the picture.

Meanwhile, his pawning continued: the Elgin Marbles studies, many of his books, his lay-figures. But he was not downhearted: "I am high in the world, in a good house, have my food, a dear

wife, a sweet family and good credit; but it is hard to work with materials like these."

But by July, his condition was again serious. Against his own better judgment and the advice of friends, he appealed directly to Lord Egremont. Such appeals, he knew, had "ruined Rossi with him; but Rossi, I suppose, applied in the style of a butcher."

Egremont took it well, advancing £100. He liked the *Alexander*, only, he said, " 'Don't make the queen d——d ugly.' 'No, my Lord, that I won't' ('I flatter myself I like a handsome woman, and know as much of them as your Lordship,' thought I)."

But before a month had passed he was being harassed again. Somehow, in September, he managed a vacation for himself at Brighton. There he "rolled in the sea, shouted like a savage, laved his sides like a bull in a green meadow, dived, swam, floated and came out refreshed." He returned to London and in November took Mary and the children to Brighton to enjoy a vacation also.

On November 13, at the invitation of Lord Egremont, he journeyed to Petworth, the Earl's magnificent seat in Sussex. There he spent five days in awed enjoyment of his luxurious and aristocratic surroundings before rejoining his family at the seashore. Shortly afterward he returned to London; and there, refreshed and re-inspired, he soon completed *Alexander*.

By January 1827 his financial situation had worsened and again he narrowly escaped arrest, this time, Taylor says, by the intervention of his "old friend" Sir Francis Freeling. Although he had finished *Alexander* the previous month, he was not entirely satisfied and continued to work at it, altering details, especially the head of the hero. Once again, after several years of neglect, his painting room was crowded with visitors, for word of his new creation, commissioned by Lord Egremont, had got abroad. One of these visitors, who had called while Haydon was absent, was an old friend, Charles Lamb. He wrote "Raffaele Haydon" his comment on the painting and suggesting a subject for another: "Chaucer beating a Franciscan Friar in Fleet Street."

I think the face and bearing of the Bucephalus-tamer very noble, his flesh too effeminate or painty. The skin of the female's back kneeling is much more carnosus. I had small time to pick out praise or blame, for two lord-

like Bucks came in, upon whose strictures my presence seemed to impose restraint: I plebeian'd off therefore.

*Alexander* was dispatched on April 4 to the Academy Exhibition, where it was not well received. By this time Egremont had paid the painter the price agreed upon, 500 guineas, and the money had all been spent. Haydon was already hard at work upon a new subject, *The Death of Eucles*. He had originally conceived and commenced this on the grand scale, but now wisely decided to make it of cabinet size. Egremont inspected the work in progress and was sufficiently impressed to offer Haydon a commission, but he was destined never to possess the painting.

The early months of 1827 were not productive. Haydon had become interested in a promising young sculptor, John Graham Lough, and had unselfishly spent more of his time and energies than he could well afford in arranging for an exhibition of his works. Partly as a result of this, the painter's finances went completely bad, and in June he was arrested. This time there was no last minute escape. Haydon found himself once more in King's Bench Prison.

CHAPTER  
· EIGHT ·

## Napoleon Musing

~~~~~ 1827-1835 ~~~~~

HAYDON'S second imprisonment lasted about two months. From King's Bench he appealed to the public for aid by writing impassioned letters to the newspapers, and to Parliament by a petition, presented by Brougham, both measures, of course, equally futile. But the painter's friends, noble and private, were aroused, and at the suggestion of Lockhart a public meeting was held on July 23 to sound the depths of Haydon's financial situation. He was found to be £1,767, 17s. in debt, and by the herculean efforts of the noble and presumably wealthy who were present a donation of £120 (including £50 from the Duke of Bedford) was obtained. It was further decided, on Lockhart's suggestion, to institute a raffle for *Eucles*, still unfinished, at £10 a chance; and an account was set up at Coutts's to receive subscriptions for this purpose until the purchase price of 500 guineas had been accumulated.

The results of this public meeting, which Frederic Haydon describes as "absurd and unworthy," while negligible in themselves, did serve to obtain Haydon's release. Of greater immediate assistance were the contributions of certain of the painter's friends, notably Lady de Tabley and Chauncey Hare Townshend. Sir Walter Scott, as he had at the time of Haydon's previous incarceration, sent £20. In each case the painter recompensed Sir Walter as best he could, in 1823 with an oil sketch of *Pharaoh* and in the present instance with a similar sketch of *Eucles*. When in durance again in 1830, Haydon solicited another £20 from his friend, promising him on this occasion a sketch of *Xenophon*, "worth 50, and more."

Two weeks after his release in late July, Haydon rubbed in a painting in a manner new to him, best described as Hogarthian.

The idea for *The Mock Election* had come to him in prison; his letter to Sir Walter Scott presents it most succinctly:

While in Prison, disheartened as I was, I was perpetually drawn to the Window by a scene that beggars all description—the Mock Election. If you had seen the High Sheriff, Sir Walter, you would never have forgotten him! a tall Irishman with a face that had the keenness of Moliere and the humour of Rabelais. His dress was a long dressing-gown which had once been new, his cuffs turned up as a sort of uniform, and two large holes at his elbows; a brass chain round his neck; an old chapeau (brass) on his head; a bunch of roses in his bosom; and for a staff, a mopstick ornamented with an empty bottle for a head!! Sir E. James, who as Lord High Sheriff, presented Mr. Pitt 30 years ago at Chigley, told me he did not do it half so well as this fellow. (Sir E. James is now a prisoner himself.) Baronets and bankers, young fellows of fashion and half-pay captains, merchants and authors, painters and editors—all crowded together looking on! I never shall forget it, and am determined to paint it. The contrast of humour and affliction and the boisterous merriment of those who were Prisoners was painful, yet the humour consisted in the contrast. . . . If I succeed in making good a sketch of the Mock Election, I shall keep it for you—it will be apropos, considering *when* you aided me. . . .

During the remaining months of 1827, Haydon continued to work at his painting, convinced that certain of its touches were never surpassed by Hogarth. He visited King's Bench to make sketches and was delighted at some of the heads he obtained: the High Sheriff; the "terrific dandy"; his mistress, "a beautiful, black-eyed, refined little devil"; and the smuggler, "handsome, weather-beaten," a composite of "wind—grog—daring." Holt, the boxer, who also sat, especially delighted him by remarking, "I have always heard of you, Sir, these twenty years, but not knowing anything of art, I thought you were 'an old master.'"

While this major work was in progress, he had been painting a portrait of his old friend Talfourd;¹ and when that was completed on November 4, he accepted an order for one of Mrs. Talfourd.

The Mock Election was ready for exhibition in January 1828, and Haydon rented a room in the Egyptian Hall for the purpose. As had become his custom, he wrote a descriptive catalogue for the occasion, the tone of which may be discerned from Charles Eastlake's letter to the painter, dated Rome, March 15, 1828:

¹This pleasant, smiling portrait of Talfourd was later engraved by John Roffe (1769-1850).

I think it is the best composition of yours I have read; although, from the difference of my view of things, I cannot always go along with your *own prominency*. Still I am willing to admit that circumstances, as well as your talents, have made you prominent, and, like Buonaparte, I suppose you do well to meet the familiarity with which the public are pleased to consider you.

Although reviewed favorably in Thomas Campbell's influential *New Monthly Magazine*, the exhibition was only moderately successful, until the Court returned to London in March. Haydon's letter to Miss Mitford narrates the surprising events that ensued:

The King was sitting with an old friend of mine [Sir Thomas Hammond], and in talking of Art, asked him if he had "seen Haydon's 'Mock Election?'" My friend replied he had. The King said, "Would it please me if I saw it?" My friend said, "I feel quite sure that your Majesty would be pleased." The King then said, "Will you get it for me to look at?" . . . It was then arranged that the picture should be sent the next morning to St. James's Palace. When I came down to the exhibition by 10 A.M. the next morning, nothing was done. The picture was not moved, and there was only half-an-hour to get it down to the palace. I got into a great passion, of course, took down the picture in five minutes, and by eleven it was in the palace. . . . At 2 P.M. I met Mr. Seguier by appointment in the exhibition room. He took me aside. "Well?" said I. "Well," said he, "I congratulate you; the King is delighted, I never saw him more so. . . ." The exhibition room was very full, and the ladies and gentlemen crowded about me and said, "Oh Mr. Haydon, I have been coming this month, and now I shall never see it!" "It shows very little regard to the public for the King to take it away," said another. "It's a great shame," said an angry gentleman. . . . Phipps, Lord Mulgrave's brother, went down to the palace the next day to see what had been done. He met M. Seguier, and asked him. "I'll tell you what has been done," he said. "I have five hundred guineas in my pocket for Haydon"; and on Monday at twelve I wrote: "Received of his Majesty, five hundred guineas. B. R. Haydon." . . . God save the King!

There was a slight, though only momentary hitch in the actual transfer of funds, which Haydon recorded in his journal:

I went to the British Gallery at half-past eleven; at twelve Seguier came, with a face bursting, and coming up to me said, "Get a seven and sixpenny stamp." "My dear fellow, I have only got 5s. in my pocket!" Seguier looked mischievously arch as he took out 2s. 6d. Away I darted for a stamp. "Threepence more," said the girl. I ran back again, got the 3d., took the stamp, signed it, and received the money. Seguier was really rejoiced, and verily I believe to him I owe this honour.

From this it will appear that Haydon was grateful to Segulier for his good offices in the affair, but subsequent events, as will be seen, caused the painter to doubt his friend's loyalty.

Even before the purchase of *The Mock Election*, Haydon had projected and commenced a companion picture, *Chairing the Member*, now in the Tate Gallery. This, like the first, was a scene from the burlesque of a parliamentary election which he had witnessed at King's Bench Prison. The moment chosen for the picture was the entrance of three armed Guardsmen who had been sent in haste by the Governor of the Prison to quell the disorder he feared. In a window in the upper right background may be seen the balding figure of the artist, sketching busily the colorful scene below.

By the end of July the picture was completed; and after more borrowings for the expenses of frame and advertising, he exhibited it at the Western Bazaar in Bond Street, along with *Solomon, Jerusalem*, and the drawings for both the prison pictures. Like the one held earlier in the year, this exhibition was only fairly successful. Haydon, of course, hoped—and prayed—that the King would want *Chairing the Member* as a companion piece to his *Mock Election*. The King, however, showed no interest; and it was finally sold, on December 31, to a Mr. Francis, of Exeter, for £300. Haydon complained at this cut rate, but necessity forced him to accept. He was further embarrassed by the purchaser's reluctance to pay, but he finally received his money in March, three months after the purchase. In the interim Haydon had again barely escaped imprisonment, saved, Taylor says, by Dr. Darling.

In April, still hoping for some sort of peace with the Royal Academy, he had sent a "Study in Chalk of a Child's Head" to the exhibition, but his efforts were as fruitless as ever. About that time he saw Lockhart again and found him strangely subdued, evidently worried by the deepening financial depression and Sir Walter Scott's misfortunes. "It was curious to see me, one whom he had grossly attacked, sitting by him, the more healthy, active, and happy of the two. He never has and never will get over the death of John Scott."

Haydon saw Sir Walter, too, again in May, when he breakfasted with the painter and sat for his head. Haydon was loud in his de-

nunciations of Hunt and his circle, but Scott did not encourage this kind of talk from his host, being convinced that "A painter should have nothing to do with politics." Privately, sensible Sir Walter felt that Haydon, while undoubtedly "a clever fellow" was "somewhat too enthusiastic." Of the pretty Mrs. Haydon, however, his approval was less reserved. His feeling for the Haydon family was always kindly and sympathetic.²

In June he met Wilkie again, after his four years' absence abroad. "He turned round and said, 'Ah, how d'ye do?' . . . I was going to squeeze his hand off and was met with this! It is only his nasty manner. I believe he has a heart, though sometimes I think it must be a Cairngorm pebble." But in the days that followed their intimacy was to some extent renewed.

Later, in July, the painter's health was bad, and Mary persuaded him—no very difficult task—that he needed a holiday. Instead of idling at some seaside resort, he determined to make a pilgrimage to Stratford-on-Avon. He was glad that he had done so. His description of his journey, in his journal and in a fine letter to Miss Mitford, is a delightful lyrical interlude in the stormy expanse of his writings.

During the latter months of 1828 he had been working somewhat spasmodically at *The Death of Eucles*, cabinet size. His progress on this painting, which was to be raffled, had been interrupted by his excursions into prison genre (for which, he says, he had the subscribers' permission); but he was now ready to see it to completion. The subject, Taylor explains, is from Plutarch's *De Gloria Atheniensium*; and Haydon, when as an experiment he exhibited the unfinished picture in 1829, described the scene:

Eucles was a Greek soldier, who ran from Marathon to Athens, as soon as the victory over the Persians was decided, and died from fatigue and wounds just as he entered the city. . . .³ His wife and children are rushing out to welcome him, not knowing his condition: a man is springing from

²Haydon's journal for July 13, 1829 contained the entry: "dear Frank was christened Frank Scott Haydon, Sir Walter his God-Father, and Miss Mitford his God-Mother. . . ." Frank Scott Haydon (born December 12, 1822), who remembered the event, relates that neither of the god-parents was present: they were represented by the parish clerk and the pew-opener.

³It is evident that Browning's poem "Pheidippides" is based upon the same incident.

a step to catch him as he drops, a woman is hiding her face, and her daughter clinging to her, while a man on horseback is huzzaing to those behind. In the background is the Acropolis; with the Propylaeum, the Parthenon, and the statue of Minerva Promachus.

It is wished to express in the figure of Eucles the condition of a hero, fresh from a great battle—his crest torn—his helmet cleft in—one greave lost—and the other loose—all military array disorganized, and the whole figure announcing struggle, triumph and approaching death!

Every caution, criticism and remark are courted. The intention, expression, composition and action are as they are meant to be; the colour alone is unfinished, and not a subject for criticism. To show a picture in this state is an experiment, but it is to let the subscribers see it is advancing, and that it will soon be done.

Eucles was exhibited again, this time in finished state, in 1830, and was raffled on April 6. The first throwing of the dice resulted in a triple tie; on the second, it was won by Mr. Newman Smith. It is now at Petworth.

About this time Haydon resumed his appeals to politicians and public for state patronage of the arts. Having composed a pamphlet in support of his ideas, he wrote the Duke of Wellington, who had just become Prime Minister, requesting that he be allowed to dedicate the pamphlet to him. The relations and the spasmodic correspondence between Haydon and the Duke, extending over the remaining years of Haydon's life, have a tragi-comic flavor all their own. Both men remain in character throughout—and Haydon, at least, while continuing undaunted in his vein, seems to have been quite aware of the comedy. In the present instance, the Duke "found himself under the necessity of declining to give his formal permission that any work whatever should be dedicated to him." But Haydon continued to importune him, attempting in his letter of December 25 to appeal to the Duke's vanity. To this Wellington replied: "The Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr. Haydon and begs leave to acknowledge the receipt of his letter of the 25th instant." This brought to an end the first epistolary bout, but the painter was by no means disheartened or defeated. It was not in Haydon's nature to give up: his resiliency in the face of rebuff and apparent defeat is one of the marvels of human character.

The pamphlet, *Some enquiry into the causes which have ob-*

structed the advance of historical painting for the last seventy years in England, which appeared in January 1829, was a temperate exposition of Haydon's familiar ideas regarding the necessity of public support for the arts, especially for historical painting. In it, while stoutly maintaining his principal thesis, he did, in conclusion, manage to say a few kind words for the Royal Academy, realizing, no doubt, that without the active support of that body, his proposals could never bear fruit. But despite the conciliatory tone of the following, it is doubtful that Haydon had experienced any real change of heart. Certainly, during the House of Commons Enquiry into the Royal Academy in 1836, his testimony was as acrid as ever. In the pamphlet he wrote:

With the most unfeigned admiration for the genius now existing in the Royal Academy, I beg to take my leave, and to conclude with expressing my bitter regret, that the prejudices of some of the old members will ever prevent, I fear, my having the honour of uniting my labours to the efforts of the rest, and supporting an institution which is now an honour to the Art.

Notwithstanding the Duke's coldness toward his pamphlet, the painter tried another gambit in February, addressing a memorandum to the Prime Minister proposing an annual grant of money for the encouragement of historical painting. To this Wellington replied that he would "object to the grant of any public money for the object"; whereupon Haydon persuaded Mr. Agar Ellis (created Baron Dover in 1831) to present a petition to Parliament, "praying the House to take this beautiful department of the Art under its protection." All of this, of course, to no effect.

Although he was almost fatally inclined to such fruitless forays into print, propaganda, and politics, Haydon's intrinsic devotion to his art and calling should not seriously be questioned. One who reads his journals and correspondence with care and understanding will find ample and clear evidence of this. There are times when his exhibitionism, his eagerness to obtain publicity and recognition, his almost Messianic fervor, tend to cast doubt upon the sincerity of his vocation; but one must not allow these undignified and often absurd antics to obscure his essential passion for what he considered the beautiful and the true.

It might, for example, seem merely theatrical when in his journal for May 8, 1829 he writes: "Spent the day at the British Museum in ecstasy. How the Elgin Marbles looked after a long time! I bowed bareheaded as I entered, as I always do." But when one recalls the record, and knows Haydon's relations with these "divine fragments," his gesture may indeed be accepted as sincere and touching; if a trifle flamboyant, the feeling was undoubtedly there. In another place he wrote:

My delight in my art is so interwoven with my nature, that I envy the very fellow who grinds my colours. I could be always in my painting-room when once there. I always leave my work with difficulty, dwell on it till I return, and recommence in pleasure. I would not let pupils set my palette, or grind my colours, or aid my designs. I love it all too much. Business, anxieties and sickness take their turns of retardation; but my heart is anchored, and it is only a slackening of the cable for a time. It is never loose; and when the sea is calm and the winds are high I haul taut up, and ride fearless, in delight and triumph.

It may be argued that Haydon lacked a number of the qualities which Anglo Saxons, at least, like to ascribe to the men they admire, notably taste, reticence, scrupulousness in money matters, and modesty. But let it be granted that these qualities, however desirable, have no bearing on the essential factor, his devotion to art, which to the present writer seems beyond question.

The idea for his next picture, *Punch, or May-Day*, had "darted into [his] thoughts" one night in February of the previous year, as he sat in the sickroom of his son Frank, "dear little intellectual, keen, poetic soul!"—"sobbing quietly, in bitter grief . . . I composed it, quite lost to everything else, till dear little Frank's voice recalled me."

In July 1829 work on the picture commenced, and by November it was finished. This painting, of less than life size (5 feet by 6), has been called by one modern critic "an outstanding achievement." C. H. Collins Baker, in *British Painting* (1933), continues: "Its blonde expression of open air, its rhythmic handling of design and fat quality of paint would have seemed to promise rare things in 1829. . . . As it hangs in the Tate Gallery it makes most of its companions look like tinsel or stained glass." A. C. Sewter in "A Revaluation of Haydon" (1942) also praises some of the indi-

vidual heads and figures in both *Punch* and *The Mock Election*, and compares these works favorably to those of Hogarth. For modern taste Haydon's excursions into Hogarthian genre seem perhaps too crowded and staged, but certain incidental details are undoubtedly felicitous. It is evident that the painter himself considered these pictures mere interludes in his High Career. He found them amusing, exciting at times, but he did not seriously propose to continue to paint low life once his current vein was exhausted.

Punch, together with *Eucles*, was exhibited in Bond Street in March 1830, and was well received, especially when it became known that the King had asked to see it. Negotiations were conducted through Seguier, Conservator of the Royal Picture Galleries, as they had been with *The Mock Election*; but in this instance the King returned *Punch* after it had been two days at Windsor Castle without expressing any desire to purchase. Haydon was distraught, and the sales value of his picture was severely depreciated.

In the debacle and arrest which inevitably followed, he was forced to mortgage his picture to Dr. Darling for £100. It remained in this friend's hands until the doctor's death in 1862, at which time it was bequeathed to the Tate Gallery.

For the King's failure to purchase *Punch*, Haydon, and later his son Frederic, placed the blame squarely upon Seguier. His report of Seguier's dealings with the King in this affair are detailed and, if accurate, reflect upon Seguier's good faith. As we do not have Seguier's version of the matter, however, and as Haydon habitually blamed others for his failures, we cannot now very well fix the responsibility. It is of course quite possible that the King did not care to buy it.

In the spring of 1829, Haydon was seeing a good deal of Wilkie. His friend had become eminent, successful, and somewhat fashionable. Haydon visited the Academy Exhibition in May and expressed disappointment with Wilkie's pictures, painted in his new grand manner under Italian and Spanish influence. Both thought it ironical that "he should tumble into history, and I into burlesque." As for modern painters in general, Haydon wrote:

It is no use to affect what I do not feel. I have little or no sympathy with the moderns. The communion I feel is with Titian, with Rubens, with

Veronese for execution and colour, with Raffaele and Michel Angelo, and the Elgin Marbles for form and expression, and with Nature for all these, with the addition of humour, and fun and satire. I see nothing in modern exhibitions from which I can learn, and which I can look at with that delight and confidence which I feel before an ancient work. It is not from conceit, for I reverence my superiors; but there is in English Art an inherent ignorance of the frame and structure—a vulgar ruddiness of colour—a lack of repose which leaves the mind in a state of excitement and fatigue, till one hurries away to a Titian or a Claude for relief and consolation, as one looks out of a heated ball-room at daybreak and listens to the lark, and scents the cool freshness of the dewy grass, and forgets the passions, disgusts, heats, fatigues and frivolities within, in the peace and heavenly repose of renewing Nature. And yet what vast, mistaken, illiterate power is in an English exhibition, struggling like an untaught giant to give vent to his ideas in a language he does not scientifically know.

Later in the month he attended the auction sale of Benjamin West's paintings, those which had remained in West's possession at the time of his death. The sale of these paintings, 181 of them, realized 19,137 guineas, considerably less than they would have brought during the artist's lifetime. For West's reputation had waned rapidly, and in the light of subsequent criticism, Haydon's remarks at the time show some discrimination:

Titian took eight years to paint the Peter Martyr. West would have painted eight hundred in that time. In drawing and form his style was beggarly, skinny and mean. His light and shadow was scattered, his colour brick dust . . . his women without beauty or heart. There was not one single picture of a quality to delight the taste, the imagination or the heart.

The block machine at Portsmouth could be taught to paint as well.

His Venuses looked as if they never had been naked before, and were too cold to be impassioned; his Adonises dolts; his Cupids blocks—unamorous.

As I left the room, I went into the dining-parlour, and saw two delicious sketches of Rubens. My heart jumped.

During these years, as throughout his life, family matters absorbed no small portion of his time and energies. There were moments when he allowed himself almost to envy Wilkie, a bachelor with "no household anxieties, no domestic harass, no large family to bring up. . . . Would I exchange my situation for [his]? No, no; not if I had ten times the trouble." But there were times

when his family did, undoubtedly, get on his nerves. As he wrote Miss Mitford:

My children begin to be noisy and restless; Frank's curiosity is opening, as well as the girl's lungs; and I am occasionally, now the boys are from school, on the point of demolishing the whole set with my maul-stick. Dearest Mary devotes herself to train and check them, but it is all of no use. They never pass my painting-room door without calling "Papa" through the keyhole; and if they hear my footstep in any part of the house, I am assailed with "Papaps" from the nursery-stairs in all the tones of harmony and discord. The other night I put on a Satyr mask, when they were all at their tea, and deliberately walked in, dressed in drapery, and took my seat. The silence that ensued was ludicrous; but they soon found out who it was, and my dress was demolished in a moment. I fear I am not just. I excite a great deal of this familiar fun, and then I complain of it afterwards, when I am not in the humour. Thus it is ever with children, who are mostly treated with injustice, and are generally fretful or happy, according to the fretful or happy humours of their nurses.

Infants, too, had begun to arrive at short intervals. Frank Scott had been born in 1822, Frederic Wordsworth in 1827, and Mary in 1829: these were the only children to survive. But five others were born between 1829 and 1836 who died in infancy or early childhood, and the painter suffered each loss keenly.

The stepsons, Simon and Orlando Hyman, also posed problems, and Haydon spent himself in their behalf. Simon, the younger, wished to enter the Royal Navy, and Haydon was energetic in obtaining him a berth as midshipman. Before the boy left home, Haydon prepared a set of maxims which he pasted on the cover of his trunk. These comprised some excellent bits of moral advice, including a special warning against borrowing, and two maxims reminiscent of the painter's own boyhood in wartime Plymouth:

Nelson said you must hate a Frenchman. There is no occasion to hate any man; but never treat with a Frenchman until you have beaten him, and then with caution.

Remember also that your father would welcome your dead body if you died in honour, and spit upon you living if you returned in disgrace.

Lay these things to thy heart, and God protect thee.

A gratuitous aggravation of his harassment he reported to Sir Francis Freeling on June 28, 1829:

. . . Two months ago I received a letter, asking the price of *Chairing the Member*. I replied 525—same as *Mock Election*. An offer was made, which I refused. A Fortnight after another came, which I *accepted*. I was then asked to pay for the case, and I was promised a deposit directly, and the balance on delivery. *I agreed*, and have never heard since. I have no doubt the whole was a *vile trick*.

The letters were signed A. Z., Post Office, St. Thomas, Exeter.

What can be thought of the heart of that man who could excite the Father of a large Family ready to catch at anything! in his wants. . . .

Haydon appealed to the Post Office to trace his correspondent, but nothing came of it. He became accustomed to receiving anonymous letters of abuse, but nothing could injure him as had this vicious practical joke.

On January 7, 1830, Sir Thomas Lawrence, the fashionable portrait painter and President of the Royal Academy, died at the age of sixty; and after lying in state at the Royal Academy, was buried with great ceremony in St. Paul's Cathedral. Haydon's relations with Lawrence, while by no means intimate, had always been pleasant enough; Sir Thomas had even, on occasion, said kind things about some of Haydon's pictures. Haydon recognized Lawrence's pre-eminence in portrait painting, but his praise was tempered by his scorn for that branch of the art. "His latter pictures are by far his best. . . . Perhaps no man that ever lived contrived to catch the fleeting beauties of a face to the exact point, though a little affected, better . . . by interesting [his sitters'] feelings, he brought out the expression which was excited by the pleasure they felt. As a man [he] was amiable, kind, generous and forgiving. . . . He had smiled so often and so long, that at last his smile had the appearance of being set in enamel."

Haydon had felt that the election of Lawrence to the presidency of the Royal Academy was "a blow to High Art it has never recovered." But the election of Martin Arthur Shee as Lawrence's successor was, he felt, absurd and disgraceful. In his *Life of Haydon*, Taylor included some of the painter's comments on Shee, with apologies for their bitterness. But as Shee and his works have long since passed into the limbo of forgotten things, there is little use in bringing Haydon's remarks to light.

What rankled most, no doubt, was that Wilkie, his friend, "the
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greatest genius in his walk that ever lived," had been given only two votes (Leslie's and Collins's), while Shee, "the most impotent painter in the solar system," had received eighteen. Perhaps some of Haydon's feeling was motivated by the letters which, Taylor says, had passed between the two men in 1829: "in which, if Haydon was coarse and offensive, Shee retorted in terms of such contempt as no man can ever forget or forgive."

Haydon had conceived the idea for his next picture, *Xenophon and the Ten Thousand* (at the first sight of the sea), about the time he began to paint *Eucles*. Shortly after the completion of *Punch*, he had sketched it in; now, in March 1830, he was ready to begin. This picture, which was to occupy him, off and on, during the next two years, has at least one distinction: for it the painter received £840, the highest price he ever got for a single painting. The painting itself has disappeared, but a contemporary description of it (in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for May 1832) may be sufficient to satisfy any lurking curiosity:

The conception of the subject is original and powerful. The labouring ascent of men, women, horses and chariots, in the foreground, and the distant glimpse of cavalry descending, the steeds excited by the sea breeze, while Xenophon, a principal though distant figure on his charger, waves his helmet, as he hears the shout of the advanced guard, and joins exultingly in the exclamation, "The Sea! The Sea!" The cry is repeated;—"along the line the signal ran," and trumpet echoes to trumpet.

The writer goes on to pick out certain "surpassing beauties": the horse's head and the action of the flank; the head of an old man borne on his son's shoulders; and the "artist-like composition of the ascending group." He does, however, enter mild objection to the crowding around the edges of the painting, and complains that Xenophon has not room to raise his helmet without cutting off half of it. As the picture was painted in "saleable size," it is evident that Haydon had felt somewhat cramped. When *Xenophon* was raffled in 1836, it was won by the Duke of Bedford, "to his evident perplexity," in Frederic Haydon's neat phrase.

Meanwhile Haydon's financial position, as always precarious, had worsened again, and on May 19, for the third time, he was arrested and confined in King's Bench Prison. The pattern was by

now established: the last despairing, futile attempts to forestall an execution; the selling and pawning and borrowing to pay old debts; the arrest; the harrowing parting from Mary and the children; the imprisonment; the public statement of his financial condition, and appeals for aid; the begging letters to his friends, notably Scott and Strutt; the petition to Parliament; the trial and "honourable" acquittal; the final release; the return to a gutted home—all must have seemed sickeningly familiar.

Haydon's bankruptcy in 1830 was thoroughgoing and complete. Earlier in the year his one steady source of income, Mary's meager annuity, had been lost through the failure of the lawyer, John Bozon, into whose hands the principal had been intrusted. Then, in April, he had exhibited a number of his pictures, kindly lent for the occasion, at the Western Exchange. These included *Solomon*, lent by Mr. Prideaux; *Alexander*, lent by Lord Egremont; the original painting of *Napoleon Musing at St. Helena*, lent by Thomas Kearsey; and *Eucles*, lent by Newman Smith who had won it at the raffle. In May, wishing to close the exhibition, which had not been successful, Haydon was restrained from returning the pictures to their owners by the proprietors of the Western Exchange, Messrs. Horn and Co., who would not release them until the arrears in rent, £48, had been paid. To his "mortification and disgrace," Haydon had to propose to the owners that each assume a portion of the debt until he could arrange to pay it. This seems to have been done; the pictures were released. But the injury to the painter's already bad credit can be imagined. His resources and the patience of some of his creditors were now exhausted: he went to jail.

Haydon's third imprisonment lasted until July 20. One feature of it, of consequence to his later history, was his first contact with Sir Robert Peel, then Home Secretary and leader of the House of Commons. Perhaps the most pressing demand upon him had been for arrears of taxes, and from prison he had written Sir Robert for relief. To this Peel promptly responded, promising his good offices and even enclosing £10 for Mrs. Haydon, "as she may be in immediate difficulty."

Haydon's association with Peel, thus begun, continued at intervals during his remaining years. A disinterested observer, even

after hearing only the Haydon side of the story, cannot escape the conclusion that Peel was more than kind, and loyal to the best interests of Haydon and his family throughout their relationship. Largely owing to the misunderstanding over Peel's commission of *Napoleon Musing*, however, the painter came to speak very bitterly of Sir Robert. And to Frederic Haydon, writing on the matter thirty years after his father's death, Peel still loomed as the villain who had brought the painter's life to ruin and disgrace.

The genesis of the idea for *Napoleon Musing* has been disputed. Some have held that Haydon derived—or stole—the idea from a French print. Others, including a writer in *Fraser's Magazine* and W. E. Gladstone, believed that Haydon's picture was inspired by the first six lines of an ode by Manzoni, the Italian poet, on the death of Napoleon: "Il cinque maggio."⁴

Whatever the source, Haydon's first treatment of this, perhaps his best known subject, was the small picture he painted for Thomas Kearsey in 1829. In addition to the solitary figure of Napoleon in the uniform worn at the battle of Waterloo, with his back to the observer, his arms folded across his breast—"you fancy how"—gazing out over the expanse of sea into the setting sun, this initial version also included symbolical figures of Britannia and her lion in the clouds.

Haydon had obtained an engraving of this and in August 1830 was trying to make arrangements with a publisher. "What a bore business is," he wrote. "Think of coming from the sublime conception of my head of Lazarus to bargain about a print with a French dealer—100 ounces of civet!"

Arrangements were finally made; and when the prints appeared, he sent the first proof to the Duke of Wellington. The Duke formally thanked him for it.

According to a writer in the *Quarterly Review*: "Sir Robert [Peel], walking in the street, was struck by a small print in a shop window representing Napoleon as looking at the last gleam of the

⁴Oh! quante volta al tacito
Morir d'un giorno inerte,
Chinati i rai fulminei,
Le braccia al sen conserte
Stette, e dei di che furono
L'assalse il souvenir;

setting sun, and was surprised to find that so simple and appropriate an idea should belong to Haydon." This offered him a chance to give Haydon a commission.

But Frederic Haydon's account differs. According to him, Peel made a friendly call on Haydon some months after his release from King's Bench, and in his painting-room saw a sketch of *Napoleon*, the print of which he knew and admired. Having hinted that the painter might be better able to support himself by portrait painting, he inquired the price for a full-length. Haydon told him 100 guineas. On leaving, Peel said: "Paint me a Napoleon," mentioning no price, but evidently assuming that it would be 100 guineas. Haydon neglected to make it clear that his price for an historical or subject painting, like *Napoleon*, would be considerably more. (Frederic Haydon sets a minimum of 300 guineas, with 500 as a fairer price.) Mary warned her husband, when she heard of the new commission, that he was making a mistake in not correcting what was evidently a false impression; but the painter decided to present the picture as an accomplished fact, then clarify the situation to Sir Robert, confident that his patron would do the right thing.

When the picture was completed, Haydon stated his case to Sir Robert and received an additional £30! For this apparent illiberality Haydon never quite forgave Sir Robert, and over the years the story grew and grew, until it became a tradition in the Haydon family that Sir Robert Peel had wilfully cheated them. Peel's good offices in obtaining Frank Scott Haydon a position in the Record Office, his kindness and practical aid to the family at the time of the painter's death, these are dismissed by Frederic Haydon with the comment: "The whole sum total of all he ever gave, of public and private money, including his first £10 for the taxes [*sic*], and the £136 for the 'Napoleon,' falls short of the 500 guineas he should have given Haydon in the first instance for that picture."

It was perhaps with this story in mind that Macaulay, after reading Taylor's *Life*, wrote his unfair, clever comment on Haydon:

Haydon had all the morbid peculiarities, which are supposed by fools to belong to intellectual superiority—eccentricity, jealousy, caprice, infinite disdain for other men, and yet he was as poor commonplace a creature as any in the world. . . . Whether you struck him or stroked him, starved him

or fed him, he snapped at your hand in just the same way. He would beg you in piteous accents to buy an acre and a half of canvas that he had spoiled. Some good natured lord asks the price, Haydon demands a hundred guineas. His lordship gives the money out of mere charity, and is rewarded by some such entry as this in Haydon's journal: "A hundred guineas and for such a work! I expected that for very shame he would have made it a thousand. But he is a mean, sordid wretch." In the meantime the purchaser is looking out for the most retired spot in his house to hide the huge daub he has bought out of mere compassion.

During the closing months of 1830, Haydon eked out an existence with minor commissions: Newton, 20 guineas to finish *Mercury in the disguise of a clown, playing Argus asleep*; Dr. Darling, 10 guineas to paint a head (possibly the portrait of Mrs. Darling); *Venus and Anchises quarrelling*, for Lord Stafford; from his grocer to paint his portrait. Frederic Haydon tells us that about this time his father was offered large sums "to paint voluptuous nuditities for a distinguished Marquis. . . . But Haydon preferred to die of starvation, children and all, rather than consent to disgrace his pencil."

In October he appealed again to the Duke of Wellington, first for state aid to historical painting; then, when that had been politely turned down, he wrote the Duke a passionate plea for employment. To this letter, for once, the Duke did not reply. A few days later he tried again in the old vein, urging a grant of public money for the encouragement of art. The Duke did reply to that one: "The Duke is convinced that Mr. Haydon's own good sense will point out to him the impossibility of doing what he suggests." Haydon carefully removed the silver lining from the Duke's correspondence—apparent only to himself—and stored it away: "his letters this time show more thinking on the subject than the last. At it again at a future time." But the next time he wrote Wellington, two weeks later, it was to warn him of a plot which he had heard rumors of, in a roundabout way, against the Duke's life. For this warning, the Duke was "very much obliged."

Finally, in desperation, Haydon wrote the Directors of the British Institution, asking for a grant-in-aid to assist him in finishing *Xenophon*, and suggesting that they might even offer him a commission. The Directors sent him a gift of £50, which charity he accepted with gratitude.

The early 1830's were years of political ferment. King George IV had died on June 26 while Haydon was in prison. The painter mourned the passing of "as thoroughbred an Englishman as ever existed in the country. He admired her sports, gloried in her prejudices, had confidence in her bottom and spirit, and to him, and to him alone, is the destruction of Napoleon owing. I have lost in him my sincere admirer; and had not his wishes been perpetually thwarted he would have given me ample and adequate employment." For Haydon had persuaded himself, on the strength of the King's purchase of *The Mock Election*, that only the machinations of the King's advisors and ministers had robbed him of royal patronage.

In December the Wellington ministry was overthrown on the question of parliamentary reform, and the Whigs, under Lord Grey, came to power. Haydon had at first been undecided about Reform. His earlier experience with liberals of the Hunt-Shelley variety, and later with Campbell, had shocked his deeper religious feelings. "Why is it," he wrote Wordsworth, "they all feel such spite? Leigh Hunt used to talk of our Lord as if he could bite Him." Now he asked the elder poet's counsel: how did he feel about Reform? But in the long run, Wordsworth's conservative, anti-Reform opinions had little effect upon the painter's thinking. During the Reform agitation he wrote three letters to *The Times*, signing them "A Reformer." To these he later attached an exaggerated importance, and when he came to paint *The Reform Banquet*, he was certain that his immortality was secure by reason of this connection with the movement.

The resumption of his association with Wordsworth in 1831 after a lapse of about ten years had one positive result. He had exhibited *Napoleon* in the spring, but a cholera epidemic and the general political unrest seem to have contributed to its failure. Shortly afterward Wordsworth called and admired the painting. Remembering the splendid "High is our calling, Friend!" sonnet which Wordsworth had addressed to him in 1815, Haydon wrote the poet requesting another. On June 11, Wordsworth responded with his sonnet "To B. R. Haydon, on seeing his picture of Napoleon Buonaparte on the island of St. Helena":

Haydon! let worthier judges praise the skill
 Here by thy pencil shown in truth of lines
 And charm of colours; *I* applaud those signs
 Of thought, that give the true poetic thrill;
 That unencumbered whole of blank and still,
 Sky without cloud—ocean without a wave;
 And the one Man that laboured to enslave
 The World, sole-standing high on the bare hill—
 Back turned, arms folded, the unapparent face
 Tinged, we may fancy, in this dreary place
 With light reflected from the invisible sun
 Set, like his fortunes; but not set for aye
 Like them. The unguilty Power pursues his way,
 And before *him* doth dawn perpetual run.

This, Wordsworth assured him, was “not warm, but piping-hot from the brain, whence it came in the wood adjoining my garden not ten minutes ago, and was scarcely more than twice as long in coming.”⁵

Haydon was, of course, gratified and proud: “I fancied myself the greatest of men when I was returning from my walk after indulging in anticipation of a certain posthumous fame. As I entered my hall I found a man sitting and waiting. He told me what he wanted, and because I refused to consent he abused me excessively, and called me ‘a shabby fellow, a d——d shabby fellow.’ This is life: a sonnet in the morning, and damned as a shabby fellow in the evening. One does not like to be called shabby, and it made me uneasy all evening. ‘A mingled yarn—a mingled yarn!’” Without laboring the point, it might seem that Haydon had pretty well epitomized his own life: “a sonnet in the morning, and damned as a shabby fellow in the evening.”

Family matters continued to absorb a great deal of his time and energy. Sometimes these affairs prospered, as when he received word that Simon, his stepson, had been rated on board H.M.S. *Prince Regent* for his good behavior and seemed well on the way to a successful naval career. Orlando, his other stepson, had entered Oxford the previous year, at 16, on a scholarship. Because of his poverty, Orlando had been having a difficult time amid the “opu-

⁵ Another poet, Thomas Moore, also admired the painting, noting in his *Diary* that, when Lady Peel showed it to him, he found “something fine in the simplicity and solitariness of it; nothing but the man, the rock, and the sea.”

lence and ease" of Oxford life. When Haydon, visiting him, warned him that as the son of a poor man he must "make knowledge and virtue his great objects, and . . . consider all privations as the price . . . , Orlando behaved like a hero. . . . Hyman will be distinguished, I am convinced."⁶

And there were illnesses and irritations. The younger children must begin their schooling. Alfred, four years old, "in bad health, handsome, peevish and fretful, says he will be a painter. (He is qualified now for an R.A.) Harry is a baby; and Fanny ill." And always there were bills to be met and servants to be paid.

Small anecdotal pictures offered one ready means of raising cash. During 1831 and 1832 there is record of eight such pictures: there may well have been others. With the exception of one, *Waiting for The Times*, the whereabouts of these lesser works is unknown. The titles of some of these will show how far Haydon had come since *The Judgment of Solomon* and *Christ's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem: Doll Tearsheet soothing Falstaff; The Dying Boy—no Hope!*;⁷ *The First Child—Grandmama's Visit—"Very like Papa about the nose, and Mamma about the eyes, my Dear?"*; *First Start in Life*; and *Sunday Evening—Reading the Scriptures*.⁸

Another source of income upon which, as the years wore on, Haydon became increasingly dependent, was the painting of replicas. In his useful check-list of Haydon's pictures, Edmund Blunden notes one or more replicas of ten of the titles, and there were undoubtedly other of his paintings which Haydon reproduced for quick sale. *Napoleon Musing at St. Helena* was by all odds the favorite. Peel's *Napoleon*⁹ had itself been essentially a large-scale replica of the original version painted for Kearsley. And between

⁶It is pleasant to record that for once the painter's optimism was justified. Orlando Haydon Bridgman Hyman received his B.A. at Wadham College in 1834, his M.A. in 1840. He became senior fellow of Wadham College in 1834. He took holy orders, and on his death in 1878, *The Times* published an obituary notice in praise of him.

⁷Painted from "dear Alfred's head, who is dying too. . . . There he dozed, beautiful and sickly, his feet, his dear hands, his head, all drooping and dying. . . . I went on painting and crying." The following year, on April 14, Haydon buried his son Harry, "my favourite child . . . after passing four days sketching his dear head in the coffin."

⁸This may be the picture entitled elsewhere *The Sabbath Evening of a Christian*; or it may be *The Quiet Hour*, mentioned in the *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society* (1930).

⁹Now in storage at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

1831 and 1846, Haydon painted no less than 25 (and probably closer to 40) Napoleons Musing at St. Helena, plus other Napoleons Musing in a variety of places: in his bedroom; in Fontainebleau; at Marengo; and in Egypt, musing on the Pyramids at sunrise. The bulk of these, some of which sold for as little as £5 or £6, were painted during the last desperate years of 1843-1844; but as early as 1835 replicas of *Napoleon* had begun to issue from his painting-room.

The ethics of producing in quantity replicas of previous successes may seem questionable. Peel, on one occasion, seemed to feel that it was; for he prevented the raffle of one of the reproductions of his *Napoleon*. But the practice was more or less common. A. P. Oppé in his chapter on "Art" in *Early Victorian England* remarks that "By 1863 the number of repetitions which were, as they said, 'bred from' a successful picture became a scandal," and that the Pre-Raphaelites were "conspicuous offenders in this respect." One can learn from Lady Eastlake that her husband, Sir Charles, painted at least five replicas of his highly successful *Pilgrims arriving in sight of Rome* (1828), apparently without protest. Leslie's *Autobiographical Recollections* mentions a number of repetitions of his more popular pictures. And if Ramsey Richard Reinagle is to be believed, Hoppner actually employed him, at twenty guineas for each half-length, to paint seventeen replicas of the portrait of Pitt which Hoppner had painted for Lord Mulgrave. According to Reinagle, Hoppner sold these replicas for 120 guineas each, as his own work.¹⁰ In any event, it would seem that the production of replicas was by no means unusual, nor was it ordinarily frowned upon.

Death was making inroads into the circle of Haydon's friends. John Jackson died on June 1, 1831, "the first of the three to go. . . . A more amiable, inoffensive man never lived. He had a fine eye for colour, and could not paint women." Haydon had seen little of Jackson since their student days, but he felt warmly bound to him, as to Wilkie, by common memories of struggle and joy.

¹⁰ Of course Reinagle is not a particularly trustworthy witness. He was expelled from the Royal Academy in 1848 for having purchased a landscape painting and exhibiting it as his own.

Mrs. Siddons died on June 9—"the greatest, grandest genius that ever was born!" The painter had always esteemed her tragic power: "What a splendid Pythoness she seemed when reading *Macbeth*! And when acting *Lady Macbeth*—what a sight!" Now, as he thought upon her dead, he must have recalled with gratitude the good turn she had done him in 1820 when, "in a deep, loud, tragic tone," before all the distinguished company who had gathered to view *Jerusalem*, she pronounced the head of the Christ "completely successful." *The Times* having deprecated the art of a stage player as "contingent and dependent," Haydon wrote a letter to the editor defending the actor's status as an artist and advocating a public funeral for Mrs. Siddons.

There may be some significance in the fact that the painter himself, his wife, and five of their ill-fated younger children are buried in Paddington Churchyard, close by the grave of Mrs. Siddons. One of these infants, Fanny Haydon, age two years and nine months, died on November 18 and was buried on the 25th. Haydon's description of her death in a letter to Miss Mitford is affecting and heart-rending; but, as *The Times* remarked, "her life had been a torture, her death was a blessed relief."¹¹

In August, before this tragedy had struck, he had taken Mary and the children to Margate and Ramsgate for a week at the seashore. The thought of the expense involved, when his bills had not been paid, gave him a moment's pause; but as "all depends upon my talents, and the developing of them in health, it may be excused." A scene en route captured his interest, and he resolved that his next comic picture would be "A Margate Steamer after a Gale—Land—Land! I engaged all the musicians to sit [What price expenses, now?], and go next week to sketch the locale of the vessel." There is no evidence that he ever actually painted this subject, but in a letter to Sir Walter Scott he did provide an entertaining description of the scene and a comment on English character:

The band of musicians Hogarth could not have invented—and then the Cocknies of every shape, size, trade, and calling! One wondered at the Sea,

¹¹The cause of death of each of these younger children was given by Haydon as "suffusion of the brain," for which Eric George gives as the equivalent modern term, tubercular meningitis.

the other at the sky; one at the Steam, the other at the paddles. And as a specimen, Sir Walter, of the utter indifference of the English for everything that is not reducible to the Ledger! After the musicians had play'd and played well—and one or two things beautifully—when they came with their money-box to collect their reward, an old Cockney, with his hat tied under his chin and a basket full of ham and brandy, turned around towards them, and said with an air of ineffable superiority: "I never encourage such *wagabonds*." This is a fact, and is the sum total of all English feeling for Poets, Painters, or Musicians—and their real estimation of their respective inspirations. I am convinced that nine people out of ten consider Paganini a *wagabond* of the very first order.

In the course of the Reform agitation, another subject suggested itself to Haydon from which he painted one of his most successful minor pictures. This he called *Waiting for The Times, the Morning after the Debate on Reform, 8 October 1831*. It was painted for Kearsey in October; another, apparently a replica, was sent to Lord Stafford, later Duke of Sutherland, in repayment of the £50 which he had advanced to enable Orlando to matriculate at Oxford.¹²

The picture was well received and was engraved by Thomas Goff Lupton in 1832. It shows two men seated at a table in an inn, possibly the White Horse Cellar in Piccadilly. Decanters and wine glasses stand on the richly-damasked tablecloth. The man "waiting for *The Times*" wears the high hat and side whiskers of the period. *The Times* recently made use of a small reproduction of this picture, in color, on its 1949 New Year card, which assured friends of the newspaper that "to-day *The Times* is again freely on sale." But in 1950 the picture was reproduced in larger size, colored, on a poster to warn readers that once again, as in 1831, paper was in short supply, and that they must be prepared to share copies of *The Times* with others.

In March 1832, Haydon took a room at the Egyptian Hall and exhibited *The Mock Election* (kindly lent by the King for the occasion), *Xenophon*, and a dozen or so smaller pictures, these latter, said the reviewer in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, painted in a sketchy manner. By Easter Monday, the smaller pictures were all

¹²Messrs. C. G. Parker and John Webb of *The Times* (London) inform me that *Waiting for The Times* is now in the office of that newspaper, but whether the original or a replica they are unable to say. Dr. T. F. Hewer of Bristol has also advised me that a copy of the painting is in his possession.

marked "Sold." The reviewer praised *Xenophon*, except for its crowding, but was severely critical of most of the smaller works. He objected in particular to the bombast of Haydon's descriptive catalogue, and found the drawing in many of the pictures faulty in the extreme: "some of the women are pretty . . . , but the men are all like himself, and remarkable for the Dutchman-like proportions of a certain garb [their trousers], or as perhaps Mr. Haydon would express it, the capacious folding of their continuations, or the grand casting or disposition of their draperies."

The exhibition was well attended by the fashionable and the polite, but Haydon no longer felt the thrill he had once known. The Princess Victoria was there: "She has not much taste for High Art or high poetry. She and her mother came to see my 'Xenophon,' which they did not understand, but laughed heartily at my 'Reading the Times.'"

On the whole, the exhibition added little to Haydon's stature or resources. That entire year, in fact, was more than ordinarily trying, with an arrest for a £14 balance due his insolvency attorney, and a record of begging letters and appeals to those who had helped him in the past that is at once pathetic and repugnant. Sir Robert Peel was at last forced to send him a harsh letter which must have been as painful to write as it was to receive: "I think it rather hard that because I manifested a desire to assist you in your former difficulties, I should be exposed to the incessant applications I have since received from you. . . . I cannot give you commissions for pictures I do not require."

For all his devotion to classical and religious history, Haydon was by no means unaware of the great events stirring in his own day. As part of the Reform agitation, a great mass meeting of the Birmingham Political Union had taken place at Newhall Hill, near Birmingham, on May 7, 1832. This meeting had been called by the Birmingham Union leaders in order to exert popular pressure on Parliament to pass the Reform Bill in its entirety. Contemporary estimates placed the attendance at this monster assembly at 200,000, drawn from the city itself and neighboring towns. The meeting was addressed by Thomas Attwood, a founder of the Birmingham Political Union for Protection of Public Rights, after

an opening prayer and invocation by the Rev. Hugh Hutton.

When Haydon heard about this meeting, his imagination was captured by the magnitude and significance of the scene, and he conceived the idea of painting a grand picture of contemporary history, with the leading characters drawn from life, at the moment of Hutton's invocation. He communicated his idea to Attwood and Hutton, and the Birmingham radical leaders seemed altogether favorable to his project. He even wrote Lord Grey, asking him to patronize the picture. Because of his position as a Cabinet Minister, however, Lord Grey refused, but offered to assist with any other painting connected with Reform. This led to Haydon's being commissioned to paint the Reform Banquet, a gala event held at the Guildhall, to celebrate the passage of the Reform Bill.

Meanwhile, he journeyed to Birmingham and there tried to organize support—and subscriptions—for his plan. He was favorably impressed with the Birmingham leaders, and sketched a few heads which he hoped to use in his painting. But the financial arrangements fell through; and all that survives of Haydon's grand project is an unfinished sketch in oil (28 x 36) now in the Birmingham City Art Gallery. In this sketch, six or seven heads are virtually complete; the rest is merely an impression of the swirling composition that Haydon planned. A. C. Sewter admires this composition, and finds the sketch "an exciting work": "that Haydon should produce the first realistic, democratic propaganda picture in English art is surprising and paradoxical."¹³

Haydon's proletarian sympathies were, however, severely limited. In his own words: "The sad truth is, I do not relish dining with the (uneducated) wages' class. I am very happy to work for them, and to do my best to educate and enlighten them, and to improve their condition, but not to *dine* with them. I prefer Tasso and Virgil, champagne and the Order of the Bath. This is, I dare say, wrong, but I cannot help it. There is poetry in the people, but

¹³Mr. Sewter also makes an interesting comment upon Haydon's oscillation between two styles during this Reform period. These are, roughly, the grandiose-historical style to which he had previously been committed, and the realistic-contemporary style of *The Union Meeting*, *The Mock Election*, *Punch*, and other genre paintings. He compares this to the changes in David's style between the Revolutionary and the Napoleonic Periods.

there is also poetry in nobility, and—*the ribbon paints well.*”

The Reform Banquet was held on the evening of July 11. Haydon spent the entire day at the Guildhall sketching the background, and during the banquet he was present to continue sketching the scene. A week later he called on Lord Grey, showed him his sketches, and was commissioned at 500 guineas to paint the picture.

During the remainder of that year, all of 1833, and well into the spring of 1834, he continued the sittings for the portrait heads of those who were to be shown sitting around the banquet tables. He had the faculty of putting his distinguished sitters at ease, and encouraged them to talk freely about themselves and affairs in an un-selfconscious way. In his fresh and flavorful manner he recorded in his journal many of these conversations and his judgments of the sitters. The fact that they knew they would not have to pay him, contributed, Haydon said, to the pleasure and ease of these informal relations. It is evident that he enjoyed these contacts with so many of the eminent men of the day, although toward the end he did grow weary of the almost endless procession. In all, he painted ninety-seven portrait heads, and included his own, in profile, as, pencil in hand, he sat looking out over the assembled Reformers. For at least eighty of these he made preliminary charcoal or chalk sketches which were preserved and later bought by Lord Althorp, third Earl Spencer, for £200. They are now in the possession of the present Earl Spencer.

It is sad to think that so much time, energy, and enthusiasm were expended on an artistic monstrosity. The individual heads in the painting may indeed be of some merit, but taken as a whole, the composition is an absurd and grotesque jumble of heads and gas candelabra, of pineapples, wine bottles, and ill-hung drapery.

The Reform Banquet, 11 July 1832 was placed on exhibition in the summer of 1834, and when the exhibition closed on August 29, Haydon reckoned his loss at £230. Subtracted from the commissioned price of £525, this left him only £295 for about two years' work. He was convinced that the failure of the exhibition and his insolvency in 1836 were both largely attributable to the eight-page attack on him and his painting which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* for June 1834. *Fraser's* was, of course, of the strongest Tory

sympathies; but even taking into account the violence of the journalistic criticism of the period, the attack on Haydon does seem unduly severe.¹⁴

In the opening sentence Haydon is characterized as "a vituperator of the public taste, and an insufferable coxcomb." The reviewer then goes on, in a passage quoted in an earlier chapter, to sneer at Haydon as a young man, when he "aped Raphael" and affected the careless, open-collar dress of the Romantics. *Jerusalem* then comes in for comment, with the only praise reserved for "the jackass." After a jaundiced side-glance at Haydon's portraits, the writer mentions the prison pictures, a reference clearly intended to remind the reader that the painter had been in prison more than once.

When at long last he comes to discuss *The Reform Banquet*, the reviewer rubs his hands with pleasure at the prospect: "Proceed we now to squash this Haydon, and spread him out over his own canvass, like a piece of high beef over a nasty bit of bread, and make a kind of dirt sandwich of him." At this point the *Fraser's* reviewer quotes some of the more absurd passages from the descriptive catalogue, taking special delight in the painter's childish enthusiasm for "the magnificence of the gas" (lights and lighted decorations), and the naive notation which Haydon included in the key to the picture identifying one group, seated in a corner, as "Those Noblemen who were invited but did not come."

No attempt is made to disguise the political predilections of *Fraser's* or its reviewer. Lord Grey is scurrilously attacked, and as for other Reformers: "to us Denman and Brougham are like garlic in cookery; they have been crammed down our throats against our will, and whenever we take a little exercise up they come, sickening, disgusting, and filthy." The portrait heads which Haydon had labored so long to make authentic are deprecated, in general and in

¹⁴In 1836, after an abusive attack on Grantley Berkeley and his novel *Berkeley Castle* in the columns of his magazine, *Fraser* himself, while alone in his shop in Regent Street, was severely beaten by Grantley and his brother Craven Berkeley, who attacked the publisher with a heavy horsewhip. Dr. William Maginn, who had written the article, acknowledged its authorship and later fought a duel with Berkeley. No casualties ensued in this duel, but one will recall the tragic death of John Scott in 1821 as a result of his critical feud with Lockhart.

particular: "Brougham's countenance, though hideous, is intellectual—in the picture he looks like a drunken chimney sweeper; the manly head of Burdett resembles a woodcock; Lord Howick is very like a prawn; Tom Duncombe, the handsome and gay, is stretched out in the foreground, looking more like a bankrupt dandy of the green-room than a patriot and a gentleman; and Mr. Lytton Bulwer has exchanged the beautiful features which are immortalized in a whiskered bust in the front of his last book, for the physiognomy of a middle-aged goat." In fine, *Fraser's* sums up, "Abominable as the production is in all its parts, we consider it quite worthy of the event it proposes to immortalize."

One of the sitters for *The Reform Banquet* had been Lord Melbourne, clever, worldly, disillusioned, whom Haydon found the most delightful of any. The painter discovered that Melbourne was "a shrewd man. . . . I was talking about Art, and he brought me to an anchor for a minute, by asking me a question that required reflection to refute, and set me thinking when he was gone." From Haydon, who considered the art opinions of the nobility pitiable, this was indeed praise. He maintained the contact, thus established, at times on almost intimate terms; and during Melbourne's prime ministership (1835-1841) he became the target for letters, petitions, and personal appeals for governmental support of all the projects dear to Haydon. That none of these appeals bore fruit need not surprise us. Haydon was fully aware of the situation and summed it up with simple clarity: "Lord Melbourne seemed to have a notion that I was a disappointed enthusiast, whom he found it amusing to listen to, however absurd it might be to adopt my plans."

His calls upon Melbourne at his home were like scenes from stage comedy: it is impossible to believe that Haydon was unaware of his own undignified role. Let the following account stand as typical:

October 13th, 1835.—Called on Lord Melbourne. "Is there any prospect of the House of Lords being ornamented by painting?" "No!" he thundered out, and began to laugh. "What is the use of painting a room of deliberation?" "Ah," said I, "if I had been your tutor at college, you would not have said that." He rubbed his hands, looking the picture of mischief, and laughed heartily. Then I said, "Let me honour your reign." He swagged about the room in his grey dressing-gown, his ministerial boxes on the table, his neck bare, and a fine antique one it was, looking the picture

of handsome, good-natured mischief. "Suppose," he said, "we employ Callcott." "Callcott, a landscape painter!" said I; "come, my Lord, that is too bad." He then sat down, opened his boxes, and began to write. I sat dead quiet, dead quiet, and waited till his majesty spoke. "What would you choose?" "Maintain me for the time, and settle a small pension to keep me from the workhouse." He looked up with real feeling. "Let me," said I, "in a week, bring you one side as I would do it." He consented and we parted. *October 28th.*—Sent down the sketch. Lord Melbourne saw it. . . . After musing some time he said, "It certainly does express what you mean, but—I will, I will have nothing to do with it." He then went on bantering me, and I replying in the same strain. It was an amusing duel.

One is glad that Haydon could find such an experience "amusing," as Lord Melbourne undoubtedly did; but one wonders, too, at the eternal resiliency of the man who, at 49, could accept his rebuffs and defeats so calmly and keep coming back for more. Some of his pertinacity was no doubt actuated by the hope that state support of High Art would result in the profitable employment of Benjamin Robert Haydon. It would be neither wise nor just, however, to assume that personal profit was his only or, indeed, his principal motive.

Lord Grey also sat for him several times, and the painter was impressed by his amiability and sincerity. On one occasion, early in their acquaintance (November 19, 1832), when he had called on Grey, he found the Earl "sitting quietly by the fire reading papers . . . looking the essence of mildness. . . . Now I should have sat still and chatted quietly, for that is what he wanted—to be relieved by gentle talk. . . . [But] I came in like a shot, talked like a Congreve-rocket and was off like an arrow, leaving Lord Grey for five minutes not quite sure if it was all a dream. How delightfully he looked by the fire. What a fine subject he would make in his official occupation."

Before the end of the month, he had rubbed in the scene; and from time to time during the next two years he worked away at the painting: *Lord Grey Musing—A Statesman's Fireside*. On November 18, 1834, with his characteristic passion for accuracy of background, he spent the day at Lord Grey's room in Downing Street, sketching details to be used in his picture. Grey had just retired as Prime Minister, and this would be the painter's last chance to

record the authentic setting. The picture was completed on March 18, 1835: it is now in the Laing Art Gallery at Newcastle-on-Tyne.

On October 16, 1831, he called on Sir Walter Scott during the novelist's last visit to London, realizing that he might never again see this old and loyal friend. Haydon's appreciation of personality was acute; his ability to observe, analyze, and evaluate character is well displayed by the following comment on his two most distinguished literary friends:

It is singular how success and want of it operate on two extraordinary men, Walter Scott and Wordsworth. Scott enters a room and sits at a table with the coolness of conscious fame; Wordsworth with a mortified elevation of head, as if fearful he was not estimated as he deserved. Scott is always cool and very amusing. Wordsworth often egotistical and overwhelming. Scott can afford to talk of trifles because he knows the world will think him a great man who condescends to trifle. Wordsworth must always be eloquent and profound, because he knows that he is considered childish and puerile. Scott seems to wish to appear less than he really is, while Wordsworth struggles to be thought, at the moment, greater than he is suspected to be. This is natural. Scott's disposition is the effect of success operating on a genial temperament, while Wordsworth's evidently arises from the effect of unjust ridicule wounding an intense self-esteem. I think Scott's success would have made Wordsworth insufferable, while Wordsworth's failures would not have rendered Scott one whit less delightful. Scott is the companion of nature in all her freaks and feelings, while Wordsworth follows her like an apostle, sharing her solemn moods and impressions.

About a year later, Haydon had occasion to record a curious experience. On the morning of September 22, just before waking, he had an agitating dream. He dreamt that he lived across the square from Scott, and looking out one morning, saw Scott's house all shut tight, except for his bedroom window which was partly open, as windows are left when a corpse lies within. He called out to Mary, "Sir Walter is dead," so loudly that it woke him up. Two days later he received a note from Abbotsford with word of Scott's death, at half-past one, the afternoon of the 21st.

As we have seen, Haydon was ever on the alert to promote schemes and devise projects which would involve his own employment. While still engaged on *The Reform Banquet*, he sounded out Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, on the possibility of painting a similar group portrait of the conference of eight foreign

dignitaries, including Talleyrand, which had been held with Palmerston at the Foreign Office. Palmerston expressed interest in the idea, but when Haydon quoted his prices—500 or 800 guineas, depending on the size—the Foreign Secretary promised only to think it over. And nothing more is heard of the idea.

In season and out, from as far back as “On the Judgment of Connoisseurs,” Haydon had deplored the deficiency of knowledge of art among the ostensibly cultured and educated classes. As a partial remedy, he advocated that the universities establish professorships of art or design, and make the study of the fine arts an integral part of the university curriculum. It is not surprising that he himself should in time aspire to appointment to such a position. He was well read in the literature of art. His contributions to the *Annals of the Fine Arts*, his study and exposition of the Raphael Cartoons, his knowledge and appreciation of the Elgin Marbles, and the successful instruction of his students in art and anatomy would all seem to validate his pretensions as an authority.

As early as June 1830, from King’s Bench Prison, he had written Dr. John Haviland, Professor of Medicine at Cambridge, expounding his views and asking Dr. Haviland’s opinions. While agreeing that some knowledge of the fine arts is a “very essential part of a gentleman’s education,” the doctor pointed out the difficulty of finding a qualified person; and when he explained further that graduates of the University were commonly the only persons eligible to hold professorships, Haydon cannot have found much comfort in his letter. In January 1834, he applied for the Professorship of the Arts of Design which the Council of the University of London proposed to establish. He was unsuccessful. Frederic Haydon attributed his father’s failure in this affair to the “intrigues . . . set on foot to prevent him gaining an official position”; the painter blamed the machinations of the Royal Academy. One may doubt that such villainy existed outside the sometimes paranoid delusions of the Haydons; for academic appointive bodies being what they are, it seems unlikely that a man of Haydon’s record would ever be selected for this post. The Council later abandoned the idea of the desirability of such a professorship. Haydon never did.

On April 23, 1834, he began his next picture, *Cassandra predicting the murder of Agamemnon on his arrival after ten years' absence at Mycenae*.¹⁵ Little progress was made on this until his friend the Duke of Sutherland commissioned Haydon to complete it for him for 400 guineas. Work then went forward, and on December 31 the picture was done. It was exhibited the following year at the Society of British Artists, and the painter was pleased with the reviews. In one, to his amusement, he was referred to as "‘Veteran Haydon.’ This," he observed, "is the first step toward the grave. By and by ‘Old Haydon’; then ‘Poor old Haydon.’"

The Duke's commission, he felt sure, had been given him because of the warm and loyal friendship of the Duchess who on more than one occasion had shown her kindly feeling toward him. Once, shortly after his release from King's Bench in 1836, she called when he was out. "I told her if she called again to come in state almost. She drove up the next day with all the paraphernalia of servants and equipage, on purpose to have a dashing effect on the neighbourhood and be of service."

In 1836 she performed a similar service for her beautiful and witty friend, the Hon. Mrs. Norton. The trial of Lord Melbourne, who had been charged by Mr. Norton with what the lawyers euphemistically called "criminal conversation" with Mrs. Norton, had but recently ended, with Melbourne's acquittal. But Mrs. Norton had still by no means been readmitted to the world of polite society in which she had previously moved. The Duchess took care of that. She had her coachman drive her and Caroline Norton around Hyde Park at a fashionable hour, with Caroline at her right hand, for all the world to see. Thus was Mrs. Norton's return to society assured.

By several accounts Caroline Norton was the model for Cassandra in Haydon's picture. It will be remembered that the painter, although certainly not a member of the group, was on easy, even intimate terms with Melbourne and the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland. As his journals have not been made available, one

¹⁵ Haydon painted another *Cassandra*, this one *prophesying the death of Hector*, in 1836. Nothing is known of this painting beyond the fact that, as Blunden notes, it was bought by a Mr. Pole at Christie's on February 8, 1908 for £5, 5s.

cannot at this time consult that invaluable source to explore the relationship between the painter and Mrs. Norton.¹⁶ Lacking such primary information, if it does indeed exist, we can only record Elizabeth Barrett's disclosure to Robert Browning, immediately following Haydon's death, when she was dismayed at the possibility that she might be called upon to edit the painter's journals:

Now I will tell you one thing which he told me in confidence, but which is at length perhaps in those papers . . . and I want you to understand . . . how the twenty six volumes hang heavily on my thoughts. He told me in so many words that Mrs. Norton had made advances towards him—and that his children, in sympathy towards their mother, had dashed to atoms the bust of the poetess as it stood in his painting room.

Now this is admittedly a dark and clouded revelation, and very much at second hand—far too slight a foundation upon which to rear a tale of illicit passion. Even granting that such affairs are at times conducted along lines not strictly logical, it should be said, in justice to both parties, that neither Haydon nor Mrs. Norton would be likely to engage in *crim. con.* with the other. Haydon was 22 years Caroline's senior. (Melbourne, of course, was more than that.) As a devoted family man, and an habitual bankrupt, he would not seem a logical candidate for the affections of one as dependent upon worldly possessions and acceptance by society as was Caroline Norton. On the other hand, it is quite possible, even likely, that there may have been some emotional involvement on a technically innocent plane, as one knows there had been between her and Melbourne. Mrs. Norton was unconventional and, according to the standards of her day, inclined to too great freedom in her social relations with her male friends.

For his part, Haydon appreciated a fine woman. ("I flatter myself I like a handsome woman, and know as much of them as your Lordship," he had said to himself when Lord Egremont was advising him about *Alexander*.) Mrs. Norton was considered a beauty. Her eyes had many admirers, Haydon among them: he found them devilish. He undoubtedly had qualities which sometimes appeal to

¹⁶Tom Taylor, in the *Life*, possibly from motives of discretion, does not mention Caroline Norton by name. In only one place does he allow himself to quote a minor reference to her by Haydon as "C—— N——."

women. He was vital and self-assured, but he could be sympathetic. His talk was vivid and amusing: he loved stimulating talk, but he could also listen. His life shows, on more than one occasion, that he was capable of forming warm, close friendships with women of intelligence and character.

In short, except for Miss Barrett's disclosure to Robert Browning, there is no available evidence of anything untoward or unusual in the relationship between Haydon and Caroline Norton. It will be interesting to see if the journals, when we are allowed to examine them, throw any further light on the matter.

The great fire which partly destroyed the Houses of Parliament on October 16, 1834, was observed by the painter and his wife, who took a cab and drove across the bridge for a better view. It was a "sublime" fire, and half of London, it seemed, turned out for the show. Among them was J. M. W. Turner whose water-color drawing of the scene, with the curving jets of water, the blaze, the smoke, the pressing crowd, is one of his finest. Haydon apparently felt no desire at the time to paint the conflagration,¹⁷ but he did take comfort in the thought of the destruction of the tapestries which had for so many years hung on the walls of the House of Lords. He had previously and of course without success tried to convert Lord Grey to his opinion that the tapestries should be removed and replaced by historical paintings which by commemorating "national triumphs" would "illustrate the superiority of the British Constitution, [and be] a fit ornament for a British senate-house."

The ashes were scarcely cool before he began discussing his plan with Melbourne and others, with no encouragement. Finally Lord Morpeth was persuaded to present Haydon's petition to the House of Lords' and Commons' Building Committee, "praying that spaces be left in the new building for the decoration of the Houses by painting." While this petition had no immediate effect, it may well have been the seed from which developed the Cartoon Competition of 1843.

Eighteen thirty-five was a year of varied activity. Haydon was

¹⁷Four months later he offered to paint the scene for Lord Egerton for £50. Pleading no room for pictures, Egerton sent a gift of 20 guineas. "Horrid work, this perpetual charitable assistance," was Haydon's comment.

in his customary straits and dashed off a number of minor pictures to keep the pot boiling. In addition to *Lord Grey Musing*, which must be considered one of his better portraits, he completed *Achilles at the court of Lycomedes*; *Christ raising the widow's son*; *The Imperial Guard*; *Mary* [Mrs. Haydon] *at her glass*; *Orestes hesitating to murder Clytemnestra*; and *John Bull at breakfast*. "*We are a ruined Nation*." He also at least rubbed in the subject pictures *Milton and his daughter selling "Paradise Lost"*; *Eloise and Abelard at their studies*; *Milton at his organ*; *Samson and Delilah*; and *A Scotch girl and her lover*, the last from Mr. Cowper and Mrs. Leicester Stanhope "from a *tableau vivant* I saw at her house." In addition, of course, were replicas, a small *Napoleon* for the Duke of Sutherland, and one of *John Bull*.

In January he was promoting a new project which for a time promised well. Casting about for another musier, he had lighted upon the Duke of Wellington. After all, if Lord Grey could muse by his fireside, and Napoleon could muse on St. Helena, why should not the conqueror of Napoleon muse at the scene of his greatest victory, the field of Waterloo? Boys, the printseller, was interested, and commissioned Haydon to paint his conception of this imaginary scene from which a print could be made.

The epistolary interchange which followed had its elements of comedy. Haydon's first letter to the Duke announced his plan to paint the Duke musing, "to be engraved as a pendant to the picture I had the honour to paint for Sir Robert Peel, of Napoleon musing at St. Helena—conqueror and captive." He also requested permission to sketch his Grace's sword and clothes, and further that the Duke sit to him for half an hour. Most humble and conciliatory in his approach, he expressed himself as "prepared to withdraw with every apology, should this intrusion; considering my feelings as a conservative Reformer and Whig, be considered unwarrantable or impertinent." The Duke merely replied that he had no time to sit.

Without authorization, Haydon went to the Duke's residence and made arrangements with his servant to sketch the clothing which the Duke had worn at Waterloo. Then, completely naive, he wrote Wellington thanking him for his courtesy. This was an error. The Duke replied with a rather stiff rebuke to the painter for his

underhanded dealings with the servant. As to the picture which Haydon proposed to paint: "To paint the Emperor Napoleon on the rock of St. Helena is quite a different thing from painting me on the field of the battle of Waterloo. The Emperor did not consent to be painted. But I am to be supposed to consent; and moreover, I on the field of battle of Waterloo am not exactly in the situation in which Napoleon stood on the rock of St. Helena." The Duke undoubtedly had a point.

Haydon replied in a long letter of apology and argument, well larded with flattery of Wellington's "genius." Two more letters came from the Duke in which he flatly refused to have anything to do with Haydon's project. He had not, he said, "the smallest objection to your painting and engraving a picture of me in any way you please," but he wanted no part in it.

The day after receiving this final letter, Haydon "had a flash of an Imperial Guard musing at Waterloo, as a fitter companion for Napoleon. Finished it over the Duke! This is the first time an Imperial Guard extinguished the Duke." Two days later he sold this to Rudolph Ackerman, printseller and publisher, for £31, 10s. The project of painting Wellington musing at Waterloo was put aside, not to be resumed until four years later.

During the 1830's, as so frequently, Haydon's days were in crazy oscillation between high life and poverty. In his journal he loved to remark upon this "mingled yarn" or "tangled web" and muse upon the violent contrasts of his life. He pawned his dinner clothes, sold his child's sketches of Napoleon, sold or pawned his prints, pawned even his spectacles without which he could not paint and for which he got "5s. for the day." Along with this went a constant stream of appeals to his friends, some of whom learned in time to disregard or refuse his requests—which were more nearly demands—when they could not see their way clear to help him. He was seldom angered by such refusals, nor was he particularly hurt or downcast. On occasions, without crawling, he even expressed sympathy with their attitude toward his importunities, and regret that he had to subject them to the awkward necessity of refusing him.

With this incredibly hand-to-mouth existence he managed to combine frequent excursions into the upper levels of society. This

was in part, no doubt, caused by what a recent writer calls "a strain of flunkeyism in his nature." But there is more to it than that. One is even reminded of Carlyle's explanation of Boswell's comparable behavior. Haydon's eye enjoyed glitter and color. He liked to feel himself a part of the world of affairs, and to mingle with the men and women who were making the history of his time. If he was at times dazzled by titles and glamor, he is not the first to be so. By and large, his insight into character was shrewd and incisive. His remarks upon the notabilities of his time show that in the main he was supremely able to assess the qualities of his contemporaries. If he cultivated the acquaintance of the great, it was not merely flunkeyism or the prospect of fat commissions that led him to do so. These were the men and women, he believed, who were shaping England and the world, the people best worth knowing. And, too, as he put it, "the ribbon paints well."

One extremely fashionable circle to which Haydon was admitted was the coterie which Marguerite, Countess of Blessington, and the Count D'Orsay had formed in 1831. It was generally thought that D'Orsay was Lady Blessington's lover; but he was such a model of fashionable dress, refined taste and discretion, and the courtly manners of the *ancien regime* that no one seemed to mind. Lady Blessington had beauty and charm. Haydon wanted to paint her portrait. Her circle was amusing and sophisticated. She had known Byron on the continent and could relate many charming, if sometimes slightly malicious, anecdotes about him, and others of the smart world in which she had her being. Although she was not on quite the same high social level as the Duchess of Sutherland, Haydon considered her "the centre of more talent and gaiety than any other woman of fashion in London"; and his journals make frequent mention of the evenings he spent there.

He was even able to stomach D'Orsay. One day when the Count called and offered certain criticisms of the picture then in progress, Haydon called them "capital" and resolved that all of them "must be attended to." On another occasion, however, D'Orsay, Haydon felt, went too far. By that time he was painting, at long last, the Duke musing, on horseback, at Waterloo.

D'Orsay called, and pointed out several things to correct in the horse. . . .

I did them, and he took my brush in his dandy gloves, which made my heart ache, and lowered the hind-quarters by bringing over a bit of sky. Such a dress! white greatcoat, blue satin cravat, hair oiled and curling, hat of the primest curve and purest water, gloves scented with *eau de Cologne* or *eau de jasmin*, primrose in tint, skin in tightness. In this prime of dandyism he took up a nasty, oily, dirty hog-tool, and immortalized Copenhagen [Wellington's horse] by touching the sky.

I thought, after he was gone, This won't do—a Frenchman touch Copenhagen! So out I rubbed all he had touched, and modified his hints myself.

With all Haydon's borrowings, pawnings, and pot boiling, it was William Newton's charity that got him through the year. References to this unique and incomparable landlord, by most accounts "a poor man," run like a thread of silver through the somber shadows of the latter volumes of the journals. It is almost as though Haydon had conjured up this "old friend Billy, the dearest friend I ever had," in his imagination, as the sublimation of all that a landlord should be and never is, an apotheosis of the eternal friend whose life and purse eternally renew themselves in immolation for the loved one. Tom Taylor calls Newton—"a Phoenix of a man," and it is impossible to better the phrase. Let the following journal entries tell the story for 1835. There were to be more, many more in the years to come.

June 14th.—I have no employment. My landlord allows me to pay off my debt to him by Achilles, and allows me £5, 5s. a week for five months to do it in. . . .

July 22nd.—Finished Achilles, thanks to God! Began it April 1st. Painted three weeks on other things. Two weeks idling. . . . At half-past nine my dearest Mary presented me with a boy. Shall I call the dog B. R. Haydon? . . .

July 26th.—Began Christ raising the Widow's Son. God bless my commencement, progression and concluding . . . and render this picture as well as Achilles beneficial to my dear landlord, Newton, for whom, and to pay off whom, they are painted. . . .

September 30th.—My worthy landlord called, and I told him my horrid condition. He behaved well, but was hurt I had not told him before. . . .

October 5th.—Out with my dear landlord, and quieted two important creditors. As a proof of this man's innate goodness of heart, he said as we went along, "I hope I shall get you through." . . .

December 31st.—On reviewing the year, though I have suffered bitter anxieties, I have cause for the deepest gratitude to my great Creator in raising me up such a friend as my dear landlord, who has helped me when

NAPOLEON MUSING

the nobility forsook me, as usual; and employed me to paint the Widow's Son and Achilles, paying me five guineas weekly, to the amount of 100 guineas, and then striking off 400 guineas for each from the gross debt. . . . I close this year, 1835, apprehending an execution; but I despair not. A star is always shining in my brain, which has ever led me on and ever will . . . a feeling [for Art] is dawning among the mechanics and the middle classes. Day has broke, however far off may be the meridian sunshine.

Forensic Interlude

1836-1845

WHEN on the last day of the year Haydon had rejoiced in the feeling for Art “which is dawning among the mechanics and the middle classes,” he undoubtedly was recalling the fine reception which had been given his lecture at the London Mechanics’ Institute on September 8, 1835. Although he had felt some natural hesitancy about appearing before a crowd whose sympathies were in doubt, he decided that he must somehow present his case directly to the public. The letters to newspapers and magazines, the pamphlets and petitions of former years had accomplished little. The nobility and the politicians had failed him: “honest John Bull” would see that something was done.

The immediate cause of this decision to lecture was the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, under the chairmanship of Mr. William Ewart, M.P., “to inquire into the best means of extending a knowledge of the arts and principles of design among the people (especially among the manufacturing population) of the country; and also to inquire into the constitution of the Royal Academy, and the effects produced by it,” questions close to Haydon’s heart. The pressure that he had applied so ceaselessly upon Lord Melbourne and others had thus accomplished something. During the Reform agitation he had observed the political efficacy of aroused public opinion. Now he was resolved to try his own hand at oratory and the swaying of crowds. While he continued to write the newspapers in behalf of the Committee, he decided in addition to deliver his lectures. He would thus further the Committee’s investigations and obtain for them the publicity he believed they deserved.

There can be no question as to Haydon's effectiveness on the lecture platform. During the remainder of his life, lecturing was the most successful of his activities; certainly it provided a steady, though small, source of income and, more important, gave him the moments of satisfaction and triumph so essential to his survival.

His *Lectures on Painting and Design*, published in two volumes (1844, 1846), show a surprising versatility in subject matter and style. At first he seems to have aimed at instructing his listeners in the historical backgrounds of art and the broad principles involved in artistic creation and appreciation. Some of the lectures seem to have been directed at students; in these he dealt with matters of anatomical structure and representation, composition, and media. Others, especially in the second volume, have more to do with general topics: personalities ("Fuseli" and "Wilkie"), the Elgin Marbles, and a discussion of "Beauty" which is at once scholarly and stimulating. It need surprise no one that, whatever the subject, he lost no opportunity to attack the Royal Academy and to advocate his favorite theses.

On January 13, 1836, when he gave his second lecture at the Mechanics' Institute—continuing his remarks on the human figure as the basis of all design—he courageously introduced a naked model to illustrate his principles. Nude models had, of course, been used in lectures at the Academy Schools;¹ but Haydon was apparently the first to display the human form to illustrate a public lecture. This inevitably caused criticism; but he stuck to his guns, even in the provincial towns where he later lectured so frequently. Should any in the audience show amusement or lack of proper respect, Haydon would rebuke them sternly, insisting with great

¹Sir Anthony Carlisle in his lectures as Professor of Anatomy at the Royal Academy usually had some rather spectacular attractions to draw the students: six or eight naked Lifeguardsmen going through their sword exercises, to display muscular action; Indian or Chinese jugglers. On one occasion, when Hazlitt attended with Bewick, Carlisle had passed around on a "dinner-plate the brain of a man, and on another a human heart. As these severally came to Hazlitt for observation, and to be passed around, he shrank back in sensitive horror, closed his eyes, turned away his pale, shuddering countenance, and appeared to those near him to be in a swooning state. I was glad, however," said Bewick, "after a little while to observe him rally, when he whispered in nervous accents, 'Of what use can all this be to artists? Surely the bones and muscles might be sufficient.'"

emphasis that the human body was not indelicate and that it must be respected as the handiwork of God Almighty and the basis of all art. Such dramatic passages and displays must have given zest and interest to materials which at times, no doubt, seemed somewhat dry and remote to the members of the audience, many of whom attended as much for amusement as for instruction.

The Select Committee began its hearings in June. As one of the principal witnesses, Haydon had a fine opportunity to belabor the Royal Academy. Sir Martin Arthur Shee, P.R.A., was the chief spokesman for the Academy, and he seems to have fared badly at the hands of both the Committee and the anti-Academy witnesses. Haydon was allowed to expound his views on decorating the Houses of Parliament and on the desirability of state employment of history painters. He also outlined his plan for the establishment of a system of schools of design, centered in London (not, however, under the aegis of the Royal Academy), with branch schools in the larger manufacturing towns.

This last suggestion bore fruit—of sorts. A National School of Design was set up at Somerset House, but it by no means carried out the principles Haydon had advocated. He was bitterly disappointed, not to say enraged, at this outcome. He criticized the school and its methods, was instrumental in organizing a rival school in London, the "Society for Promoting Practical Design," and set about advocating and organizing schools which would be in accord with his own ideas in the principal cities he visited on his lecture tours. The fact that a number of such schools were established as a result of his efforts brought him great comfort and satisfaction. Thus Haydon prefigured certain socialized concepts of art which are today credited to the later Victorians.²

There are several descriptions of Haydon's appearance and manner about this time. Perhaps the most picturesque is that of

²Haydon's early advocacy of the concept of art as a social force has been ably discussed by Varley Lang in his article on Haydon in the *Philological Quarterly* for July 1947. He points out the close similarity between Haydon's and Morris's insistence on design as the basis of all art, and the importance both men ascribed to the instruction of workers and artisans. Mr. Lang concludes: "I do not mean to say that Morris, Ruskin, and Arnold are indebted directly for many important ideas to Haydon. . . . I wish merely to make a tribute to a pioneer. . . . I believe [Haydon] deserves to have his name inscribed with the three great reformers in the field of arts who came after him."

the painter in his fiftieth year as recalled by his son Frederic:

a handsome, fresh-coloured, robust, little man, with a big bald head, small ears, aquiline features, a peculiarly short upper lip, and a keen, restless, azure-grey eye. . . . He was a very active man; motion was his repose. In fact, he lived in a hurricane, and fattened on anxiety and care. He carried himself uprightly and stamped his little feet upon the ground, as if he revelled in the consciousness of existence. . . .

This picture is filled out by William Bell Scott, a less sympathetic observer:

Of all men—I do not limit myself to artists—I have had the means of studying, Haydon was the most self-sufficient. There are various tempers or habits of egotism; his was simple vanity, intellectual and personal. . . . He was unconsciously like a comic hero in a farce as he ascended to a well-filled drawing-room waiting dinner, for example. Approaching the door, he threw back his coat collar on either shoulder, inflated his chest, even beat his bosom to raise his spirits, and lifted his head high in the air.

The need to raise his spirits and bolster his ego arose again on September 9, 1836, when, for the fourth and final time, he was arrested. He was taken to Davis's lock-up house in Red Lion Square; thence, after three days, to King's Bench Prison. Frederic Haydon, then nine years old, remembered the arrest: the family at breakfast, the ringing of the doorbell, the servant entering: " 'If you please, sir, Mr. "Smith" wishes to see you.' . . . 'Tell your mother I have gone out,' " was all the painter said. And in a few minutes the family, peering through the windows, saw their father being driven away in a hackney coach.

He remained in custody a little over two months—until November 17. His property was sold. Newton had offered to pay his way out, but Haydon refused. Instead the landlord bought his possessions and painting gear for £133, 10s. and paid the difference. While the details of the transaction are less than clear, it is evident that Newton did this in order that the painter might have his things back immediately after his release and thus be able to resume his painting without further interruption.

His experiences this time were little different from those of past imprisonments. There were the usual odd and interesting characters to be met and recorded in his journal—which, apparently, he

took with him to the prison. He also made use of his enforced leisure to write letters. One was to Sir Robert Peel, not specifically asking for aid, but outlining his position and referring to his—Haydon's—"absurd conduct" regarding *Napoleon*. He also wrote letters to the *Morning Chronicle* and the *Spectator* complaining at the inadequacy of private patronage and advocating national competitions, two annually, and employment. These suggestions were discussed in the columns of the journals addressed and also in *Blackwood's Magazine* which, while commending the "gentleman-like and temperate spirit" of Haydon's letters, found his proposals impracticable and his complaints undignified.

During his imprisonment, too, he showed three of his recent paintings at the British Institution Exhibition. *Blackwood's* took a dim view of the exhibition in general and of Haydon's works in particular: "after Sixty-eight Royal Exhibitions, the arts have retrograded. . . . Artists may be multiplied, and yet art not advanced. . . . We are quite at a loss to understand Mr. Haydon. He is either much above or below our taste and comprehension. . . . Here [in *Christ Raising the Widow's Son*] are strange mixtures of red, blue, lamp black and treacle." His background consists of "raw blue stained over with dirty colour, as in imitation of old pictures uncleaned." The *Achilles* was especially objectionable: "it is all so bloody, it would shame a butcher. One of the female figures covers her eyes with her hand, and no wonder, all the rest have dots for eyes. Achilles is a great striding ninny, red, red, red. We thought at first he had been wounded . . . the only cool part about him seems to be his heel, where he really was vulnerable; with that exception he seems wounded all over—there never was so great an absurdity." And *Falstaff and Prince Hal*, *Blackwood's* felt, was also marred by excessive redness.

Even without having seen these pictures—which have now disappeared—it is not difficult to believe that they were inferior work. The pressures to which Haydon had been subjected, the necessity for rapid execution and quantity production could not very well have resulted otherwise.

Like many another passionate idealist, Haydon acted at times in ways incomprehensible to most. A student of his life should not be too ready to believe that he has determined once and for all the

mainspring of the man's character. Some would reduce it to a single word: vanity. Now surely there was vanity—perhaps an inordinate amount of it—at the root of many of his actions. But vanity alone would not account for many of his qualities: his humor, his family affections and sacrifice, his generosity and capacity for friendship, and his undoubted devotion to his country and his art.

Was it vanity, wounded vanity, that caused him to write a curious letter to Newton, a month or so after his release from prison? Perhaps. But read it carefully and you may hear the cry of a tormented soul, hurt and despised by others, now cruelly wronged by the one friend whom above all he loved and trusted. It may seem almost like a love letter, outgrowth of a lovers' quarrel, as passionately mistaken and unjust as such letters often are. The fact that it was utterly mistaken and unjust, that Newton had not wronged him and could never conceivably do so, makes it no less poignant. The obvious childishness and absurdity of some of it—the stiff threat to quit the premises (What a relief that would have been to any landlord!)—the mingled affection and hurt pride: these are scarcely worthy of the Man of Decision. And why did he insert this letter, and Newton's replies, in those journals of his which he was convinced would one day tell his story to the world? The ways of the human heart are devious indeed, Haydon's, perhaps, more so than most. Of course, we can fall back upon Taylor's shocked understatement: "Such a tone taken by a debtor to his creditor indicates altogether peculiar notions of these relations." But the letter:

London, 21st December, 1836

My dear Newton,

Mary came home last night with the usual quantity of gossip and scandal, of which you possess so abundant a fund.

It seems it is—who has told you that falsehood of my having given six lectures at the Milton and received 20 guineas, whereas I only gave three lectures and received 10 guineas, £10 of which I brought you next day, explaining I had only received half, though given to understand it would be all—which £10 I borrowed of you again, £5 at a time.

And this is the way to excuse your own abominable cruelty in doing your best to add to the weight of degradation and misery I have suffered by insinuating to my wife these abominable lies.

I am ashamed to use so gross a word, but your forgetfulness, your con-

fusion of memory, your jumbling one thing with another, your making me write notes when harassed with want, which I forgot to reclaim, and then your bringing them forward again when it suits your convenience, provoke me to it.

Don't talk to me of your affection. Pooh! To let a friend come out of prison after ten weeks locking up—degraded in character—calumniated and tortured in mind—to let him come to what had hitherto been the solace of all his distresses (his painting-room) stripped of all that rendered it delightful, and stripped, too, under the smiling pretences of friendship, and under the most solemn assurances that everything would be returned, and then, on the very morning I came home, when one would have thought all beastly feelings of interest would have been buried in the pleasure of welcoming me back, at such a moment to break your word, and to add to my forlorn wretchedness, by refusing to keep it, is a disgrace to your heart and understanding, and will be even after you are dead, as well as while you are living. Had I known the extent of what you had been guilty of, I would have scorned to receive the balance of Sampson. It was only when I came home I saw what you had done.

However, Mrs. Haydon says, if I will only say you shall not be a loser, the pictures and sketches shall come back directly. I told you so in prison, and still tell you so now. You know that: but your delight is the delight of the tiger over his prey, not to kill at once, but to play with your victim. I tell you again you shall not be a loser. Now keep your word with Mrs. Haydon and send back the things. I did not intend to say a word more, but as this proposition to Mrs. Haydon is not unreasonable, to oblige her I say you shall not be a loser.

Put this among your collection and bind them up. Now you have made a step and I have made a step. I'll be frank; a threat is always the last refuge of a coward. I do not threaten—but if the things (pictures and sketches) are not all in my painting-room by Friday night (I allude only to those you took away with the last books you returned), without any asperity, or any ungrateful impertinence, or any wish to wound a kind-hearted (at bottom) old friend, but solely on the principle of justice to myself and family, with a wish still to retain our affection, on Saturday I shall be guilty of the violence to my own heart of giving you notice to quit, according to the terms of our lease, at Midsummer next, but as soon as possible before.

I am, dear Newton,

Yours truly and affectionately,

B. R. Haydon.

Whatever conclusions regarding Haydon one may reach after reading this, there can be no possibility of disagreement over Newton's replies. His two notes were indeed, in Taylor's phrase, "written with very milk of human kindness."

FORENSIC INTERLUDE

Dear Haydon,

I shall send the pictures and sketches to you to-day, if possible.

Mrs. Haydon spoke of the sketch of the Widow's Son as though it had been received with the last things brought away. I referred to your note that came with it, and others, to assure Mrs. Haydon how it came into my possession, and the only convenience your note can be to me is to bring them forward to rectify any misunderstanding. This, and your promissory notes (stamped and unstamped) being unpleasant truths, I suppose you call scandal: of them I have an abundant fund.

I will write you about the lease.

The second note speaks for itself:

Dear Haydon,

The old fashioned compliments of the season. A merry Christmas and a happy new year and many of them is my sincere wish to you and yours, and I hope you are as free from ill-will to anyone as I am.

I have yet to learn what act of mine is considered an insult to yourself, but as I am certain I am incapable of offering one, I give myself little trouble about it.

Thanks for your good wishes, and the ticket for the lectures, of which I have omitted to acknowledge the receipt.

Yours truly,
W. F. Newton

Before his imprisonment, Haydon had started two large pictures in his earlier vein, one on a subject from English history, which pleased him. This was *Edward the Black Prince thanking Lord James Audley for his Gallantry in the Battle of Poitiers*; it had been commissioned by the then Lord Audley at a "handsome" price. But it developed that Lord Audley was insane, and after he had received £85 from his patron, the commission fell through, and Haydon was left with another large unsaleable picture on his hands.³ The other picture was *The Heroine of Saragossa*. The painting of this inferior work dragged on until February 3, 1843. He had in the meantime determined to dispose of it by a raffle, with fifty shares at ten guineas each. His receipts for the subscriptions which came in from time to time were one source of income during the years it was in progress.

This was the third of his pictures to be raffled. *Euclès* had

³Newton finally took this picture in 1842, striking off £525 of Haydon's debt to him. It is now at the Plymouth Museum and Art Gallery.

brought £525; *Xenophon*, £840; and *Saragossa* brought £525. Having discovered such a profitable outlet for his product, he did not scruple to conduct a sales campaign by what today would be called direct mail advertising, including the famous-names-testimonial technique which is now standard practice among makers of cold cream, blended whiskey, and cigarettes. Witness his letter to Sir Francis Burdett, dated 14 Burwood Place, June 26, 1843:

Sir,

My Picture of *Saragossa* now at the Royal Academy is to be disposed of by Raffle, 50 shares at 10 guineas each. The Duchess of Kent, the Dukes of Sutherland, Devonshire, Bedford, Northumberland; Lords Carlisle, Palmerston, Langdale, Stanley, Colborne, Spencer, Mr. Labouchere, Horace Smith, & others have all taken shares.⁴

I am suffering bitterly from the state of the times, have had no commission for 2 years, & would be much honoured & served by your taking one share.

There were, of course, always those who were ready to carp at this method of disposing of works of High Art. But Haydon had an answer ready for them. His letter to the Editor of the *Morning Post* appeared on May 11, 1836:

Sir—It was stated in yesterday's *Post* that my "*Xenophon*" having *failed* to procure a purchaser was put up for raffle. It *never* failed to get a purchaser, *because* it was *never* put up for sale. It was begun as a raffle picture from the first touch to the last, and I went through it entirely, aided by the Royal Family, the nobility, and other subscribers. The Academy said when I began this system it *degraded* the art; perhaps they forgot Hogarth *degraded* it before, and Mr. Bailey (their own academician) is *degrading* it now. So far from degrading it, it is in my opinion the most English way in the world; it gives every man, from the King on the throne to the humble tradesman, a chance and an interest.

When *Saragossa* was raffled on May 23, 1844, Lockhart served as chairman. The Duke of Sutherland had taken six shares—surely a gesture of loyal friendship—but neither he nor any of the other noble patrons was successful. Instead, one Webb, described as a

⁴Subscribers to the raffle for *Xenophon* had included the King, the Duchess of Kent, the Princess Victoria, five dukes, two marquises, ten earls, and six barons. A few commoners were, of course, privileged to fill out the list. One, of whom the painter was especially proud, was Goethe, who "most gladly" added his name in response to Haydon's solicitation.

"butterman," was the winner. Webb, from whom the painter had extracted a donation of £10 two years before, had once been a pupil of Haydon's, recommended to him by Sir George Beaumont in 1819. But "after drawing hands . . . he became disgusted; set up butter shops—has three in the town—has made property, and patronizes his old master; poor Webb!"

Another large work, much finer than either of these, had been commenced on October 8, 1837. As a consequence of his appearance as a lecturer at Liverpool, he had been commissioned to paint the subject *Christ Blessing little Children* for the Church of the Asylum for the Blind in that city. The commission price was generous enough—400 guineas—the subject was congenial. He worked faithfully, except for interruptions occasioned by his lecturing, and completed it on August 31, 1838. He supervised its hanging on October 22, and applied the finishing touches on the 25th: "one year and seventeen days since I began the picture. *Laus Deo.*"⁵

On his journey to Liverpool (he marveled at the speed of the railroad: 210 miles in nine and one-half hours), he encountered one of those numerous characters whose oddities he found amusing enough to record in his journal. This one was a young American who sat with him in the coupe. In him

All the characteristics of his countrymen came out to perfection. He carelessly tumbled about bills to a considerable amount—boasted of the Battle of Plattsburgh, which I had forgotten, till I was obliged to pull him down a little, tenderly, about the *Chesapeake* and the *Capitol*. His face altered instantly.

He said he could animal-magnetize. I defied him: he began with all his antics, but I looked him sternly in the face and shook him. He pretended he was ill, and finding me broad awake said: "Mayhap, you are a strong mind." "So they say," said I.

During these final years, Haydon's promotional efforts continued. One may marvel at his ingenuity at conceiving projects by which he hoped to supplement his income from High Art that had proved so inadequate. Lecturing continued, with no little personal success and satisfaction but no very great financial return. The production

⁵It was this picture to which Samuel Rogers paid what Haydon considered a pretty compliment. After looking at it for a long time, the poet said, "When all the figures in the picture get up to walk away, I beg leave to secure the little girl in the foreground."

of replicas, too, was continually in progress. Some, as we have seen, toward the end went for only a few pounds. Napoleons, of course, found the readiest market, and Haydon was not above soliciting orders for these or other small subject pictures from his friends and acquaintances. "Haydon, patent for rapid manufacture of Napoleons Musing," he once noted wryly in his journal. One of the Napoleons, according to Frederic Haydon, was in the Art Union lottery of 1844 and would have brought the painter 300 guineas had not Sir Robert Peel stopped the lottery as illegal. But this replica, Frederic says, "through the indefatigable exertions of the late Earl of Westmoreland, one of Haydon's truest and kindest friends, was afterwards sold to the then King of Hanover [for £200], and was placed by him in his palace at Herrenhausen."

Earlier, in 1837, Haydon had conceived the idea of asking the Duchess of Sutherland, his charming young patroness and friend, to approach the youthful Queen Victoria regarding his ambition to be appointed her historical painter. He hoped for "an income like West." As West had averaged better than £1000 a year during his thirty-three years as historical painter to George III, Haydon was sanguine indeed. Of course nothing came of this project, and in one sense the painter felt relieved. Even before the failure of his plan he had wondered

If I succeeded, what will become of my liberty? I do it for dear Mary's sake, as her health is feeble, and any more shocks would endanger her life.

If the Queen were to say, "Will he promise to cease assaulting the Academy?" I would reply, "If Her Majesty would offer me the alternative of the block, or to cease assaulting, I would choose the block." *Nous verrons*. Nothing will come of it, and secretly I hope nothing may.

During his latter years, too, Haydon continued to accept pupils. His fee was 200 guineas for a three-year course, his pupils coming to him only on Mondays. Two letters now in the British Museum, addressed to J. Hutchings of Blakesley, Towcester, and dated February 13 and 23, 1845, show his attitude toward teaching at this time. Hutchings, it appears, was considering coming to London for instruction, and Haydon, while warning him of the perils involved in taking up an artistic career, still held out encouragement: "but *remember*, enthusiasm may exist without an atom of genius! & do

not mistake susceptibility to the beauties of others, or of nature for a power by any industry to produce them. . . . It is a fearful path narrow long, craggy, & dark. . . ." As to fees, he was apologetic about the necessity of charging anything at all, but pleaded his family responsibilities. His final word perhaps merits quotation: "Still my dear Sir, reflect well before you launch into the Deep Ocean of a London life—I would rather die in the streets in London, than live on a fortune any where else—you may not be adapted for its desperate struggles—I live in them, I breathe in them, & faint without them—you may be a tenderer temperament, & having spent all your money, shrink from the contest."

When a Nelson Monument was proposed in 1838, Haydon entered his plan and design in the competition. "A monument to Nelson's glory," he wrote Sir George Cockburn,

should not, in my humble opinion, be the ordinary one of Neptune, Fame, and Victory, cannons and shot, cables, anchors and ship's prows, &c, &c., but a TEMPLE; inside a statue, simple and solitary, and on the pedestal I would put

"NELSON

"A little body with a mighty heart."

The four sides of the four walls should be painted with four of the most striking events in his glorious career. For example:—

1. Receiving the swords of the Spanish officers on the quarter-deck of the "San Josef."
2. The battle of the Nile.
3. Signing and reading the letter to the Crown Prince at Copenhagen.
4. Trafalgar and death

If you think this suggestion worth the attention of the committee, perhaps you will do me the honour to lay the proposition before them.

This evidently Sir George did, but Haydon's design was not accepted; instead, the present Trafalgar Square column and statue were decided upon. Haydon attributed his failure to his lack of energy in preparing oil sketches which would have displayed his design fully. He had submitted water-color sketches: but "How wretchedly imperfect is water colour drawing!" Then, too, a limit of £30,000 had been placed upon the project, and Haydon's estimate of the cost was £70,000. He did, however, five years later, paint *Nelson sealing the Letter at Copenhagen*, the third of the

paintings proposed in his design, with two replicas in 1844.

Haydon's research into the background for this Nelson picture may be taken as typical of his passion for accuracy of details, comparable to his earlier devotion to anatomical study. He questioned Sir George Cockburn of the Admiralty as to where Nelson had been mortally wounded (it was, Sir George said, on the quarter-deck and not on the poop), and in what part of the ship Nelson had written his letter to the Crown Prince (gun-deck, orlop, or cockpit?). He wrote Sir Thomas Hardy, Governor of Greenwich Hospital, who had been Lord Nelson's flag-captain, for further information. Finally, by going to Brighton to sketch and interview Thomas Wallis, Nelson's secretary at the Copenhagen affair, the painter obtained authentic details of action and costume from an eye-witness and participant.⁶

In 1844, another golden opportunity seemed in prospect when William Tite, the eminent architect of the new Royal Exchange, wrote Haydon asking for "some notion of the cost of decorating the panels of the merchant's area with fresco painting." This was a question which the painter delighted to answer. In his carefully considered reply he went into some detail, proposing that the twenty-four large spaces "be filled with a series of beautiful fresco illustrations of our rise [in] commercial greatness," and that the eight small spaces contain "portraits of the greatest men who have contributed to that rise." This vast project, he insisted, should all be under the direction of one man. As to cost: "£3500 would prevent any man who undertook the whole from losing; £4000 would put £500 in his pocket; and £5000 would enable him to lay by in funds for old age and decrepitude. . . . I respectfully offer myself—perfectly delighted to do so—to undertake the whole for £3500."

In view of the magnitude of the project, Haydon's figure does not seem especially high; but for some reason this estimate, Tite informed him, "staggered the gentlemen" of the committee. Again, nothing came to pass.

Haydon's ideas on the decoration of public buildings seem sound

⁶On other occasions, for other pictures, Haydon consulted the leading authorities of his time, notably James Robinson Planché, an expert in matters of heraldry and costume. He frequently borrowed or sketched weapons and garments in museums and collections in his search for the authentic.

enough today. In 1845 he wrote, with a final touch of shrewd humor:

The Conservative Club is decorated; but what flowers and griffins have to do with Conservatism, Heaven knows!

To decorate a public building, means to illustrate by design the principles for which the building is erected. In the Vatican, the palace of the Pope is decorated with illustrations of the connection of religion with man, and the power of the Catholic Church, as an engine of God, to lead him by religion to salvation.

The Royal Exchange has equally an object. It was built for the convenience of commerce. The decoration of it, therefore, should have had reference to the origin and progress of commerce as the basis, not only of wealth, but of the intellectual and religious advance of nations. For nations are refined by their commerce with a superior nation, as much as by their conquests.

The Conservative Club should have shown the progress of Conservatism,—how all young men without a shilling are generally Radicals, because they have nothing to conserve, and end by being furious Conservatives when they have made their fortunes.

One project that did work out was his commission to paint the Convention of the Anti-Slavery Society. The meetings began at Freemasons' Hall on June 12, 1840. Haydon was invited to attend and render a sketch of the scene. This resulted in a commission to paint the convention in a work of mass-portraiture similar to *The Reform Banquet*. Haydon proceeded, as he had with his earlier picture, to sketch portrait heads, 135 of them. He marveled at his own rapidity. On the 17th he drew from seven until four, sketching fourteen heads "till my brain got dazzled. I have made thirty sketches in three days." Later, "I did fifty-two in five days."

This enormous picture (117 by 151 inches), now in the National Portrait Gallery, is an even worse hodgepodge than *The Reform Banquet*. He completed it in ten months. When it was exhibited it was severely handled by the critics, and with good cause. He entered a feeble defense in his journal. But he must have known how bad it was when he wrote: "The delight I had in turning to one of my historical compositions after I had got rid of that dreadful collection of faces is not to be described."

Its painting did acquaint the painter with a number of new characters to record in his journal: Thomas Clarkson, whom he visited and sketched at Playford Hall, Ipswich; Lucretia Mott,

leader of the women delegates from America;⁷ William Lloyd Garrison, the American abolitionist; Amelia Opie, novelist, and widow of the painter; and Lady Byron. By Lady Byron he was especially interested: "There is a lambent sorrow about her, bland and touching, but she was no more fit for him than a dove for a volcano. Poor Lady Byron! She looks as if she *saw* an inward sorrow. Perhaps his sublime head is always haunting her imagination. . . ." Unfortunately, because of the officiousness of Mrs. Anna Jameson, who accompanied Lady Byron at her sitting and fancied herself a connoisseur, the head of Lady Byron "turned out bad."

It was during these latter years that death struck Haydon two especially cruel blows. The first came in April 1838 when he learned that his stepson, Simon Hyman, had died of the bite of a sea snake which had been hooked and brought on board H.M. brig *Algerine* at anchor in Madras Roads. Young Hyman's captain, Edward Stanley, broke the news to the painter in a fine letter, dated December 31, 1837. It was a severe blow: he had been a promising lad with a good future: Haydon loved him as his own son. And Mary, his mother, perhaps never recovered from her grief until it was swallowed up in larger and more catastrophic tragedy eight years later.

The second blow, even keener, was the death of David Wilkie who, returning to England, died suddenly on shipboard, June 1, 1841, and was buried at sea.⁸

Haydon's journal for the next several months is heavy with mourning for his friend. It is a strange, wild sort of mourning, half praise, half reproach—remembering their youthful fun and struggles and disputes, remembering also Wilkie's later conformity with the Academy and his stiffness toward Haydon in distress.

But however wildly and strangely expressed, Haydon's mourning was sincere and deep. There was bitterness, too; and when the Academy asked him to sign an address of condolence to Wilkie's

⁷"I found her out to have infidel notions, and resolved at once, narrow-minded or not, not to give her the prominent place I first intended. I will reserve that for a beautiful believer in the Divinity of Christ."

⁸J. M. W. Turner painted his conception of *The Burial of Sir David Wilkie*, in which, Mollett says, "a great flood of crimson light seems to consecrate the temporary chapel in the waist of the ship and the coffin's plunge into the illuminated wave."

sister, he refused, considering the academicians unfit instruments, unworthy of their deceased fellow who was, in Haydon's opinion, the greatest and perhaps the only artist among them. At last, of course, his ravings ceased; and then he cried: "Peace to his spirit! May we meet hereafter, cleansed of our earthly frailties, never to separate more!"

His lecture on Wilkie was first delivered at the London Mechanics' Institute on October 22, 1841. The wound was still fresh and deeply painful, but he was not averse to displaying it in public. Years later, Daniel Maclise, R.A., "full of child-like love of fun, and child-like interest in things amusing—most graphic in his word painting," described the lecture for the amusement of his friends at dinner.

"I never saw such a piece of clever acting," said Maclise. He mentioned Wilkie as that great artist and his intimate and early friend; and then he stood upright and firm, and covered his face with his hand. "You might almost fancy the tears flowing," said Maclise. "He stood a minute or two thus, all the time keeping his audience in suspense. They then began a slight clapping of hands and scraping of feet. Still he did not move his hand away, but with the other hand made a deprecatory motion to them to be quiet, and yet he did not uncover his face. Another pause, and then the slight clapping was renewed. Once more the deprecating hand—it was the best bit of *pose plastique* that I ever saw—it might be genuine. It was nearly five minutes before the face was uncovered and the lecture resumed."

That Haydon was not unaware of the effectiveness of this byplay is shown by his complacent comment to Miss Mitford on October 30: "Talfourd was pleased with my lecture on Wilkie. I was affected and the women cried, so we had a pretty touching affair."

As a lecturer, Haydon seems to have been part expositor, part evangelist, and, as the Wilkie lecture showed, part actor. "His manner was natural, his voice clear and musical, his delivery rapid and impassioned, and the evident sincerity with which he drove home what he called 'the naked truth,' completely carried his audience with him," said Frederic Haydon. "The extent of his knowledge, the originality of his style, the simplicity of his explanations, and the readiness with which, with a piece of white chalk, he dashed out on a black board the human figure, a head, a limb, or any part of the human form, delighted his audiences, while the inimitable

way in which he leaned over his reading-desk and took them into his confidence, and threw good stories, fresh from life, into his 'lecture,' doubled its impression, and made him a prodigious favourite."

On his lecture tours, Haydon ranged far, carrying his evangel to the Philistines in Liverpool, Leicester, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Bristol, Hull, and Edinburgh. He felt an enormous satisfaction at the audience response and the professed eagerness shown to carry out his proposals. But like many a sincere revivalist, he came in time to doubt the effectiveness of these emotional conversions. "It is now four years since I was in Manchester," he wrote Seymour Kirkup from Liverpool in 1844, "and they have retrograded. The school of design I founded . . . has been allowed to sink into a Government school, where [my] principle is reversed." Half regretting that he had not gone to Italy and settled there as had Kirkup, he went on to explain his purpose and methods in lecturing:

[Italy] is the land of *Art*. The people have more imagination than reason. When a people have more common sense than imagination, Art struggles and gasps. Such people underrate everything that is not gross and evident. They do not believe painting or poetry can convey instruction, elevation of thought, or example. They would spend the money subscribed for public decoration in a parish dinner to the overseers, or a public dinner to their member, and think it better spent than in the most divine fresco for their church or town hall that human genius could conceive, or human hands execute.

I am here just now digging this into their iron and cotton skulls. I tell them they prefer a Habeas Corpus to a Michel Angelo; I tell them they spend more money on Art with less good result than any two countries in Europe; I tell them they are below all countries in education and taste; I tell them their decoration of the Houses of Parliament will be a "job," a wretched medley of buff coats and costume, like an ancient armour shop in Wardour Street; I tell them it will be the ridicule of Europe, and I laugh at them and abuse them for permitting it, and they thunder at me with applause till the roof echoes again. In fact my home truths seem to afford them a particular delight. The fact is my character is so established for telling all classes the truth, that all classes pay me well to tell it to them. I treat them like children; if they go too soon I say, "Sit still, there is something coming you should hear." I have naked models wrestle before them. I have preached, talked, drawn for them, and done everything a man can do. And upon my life they are the same tasteless, ignorant, money-getting beings as ever.

The lectures which undoubtedly gave him the greatest satisfaction were those he delivered by invitation and without remuneration at Oxford University early in March 1840.⁹ To lecture at Oxford, he said, had been one of the day-dreams of his earliest youth. There were six lectures in all, delivered at the Ashmolean Museum, and his audiences increased with each. He was received by the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Shuttleworth, with whom he dined *en famille* at New College, and he met and dined with many Oxford notabilities, tutors, fellows, and professors. He felt thoroughly at home and at ease among the dons: "Thank God, at last I have made my way to society where I am happy."

On the 14th, he returned, somewhat reluctantly, to London; but before he left Oxford he wrote Wordsworth of his intense pride and gratification at his glorious reception there, an honor to be ranked second only to the sonnet, "High is our calling, Friend!" "After the distinction of yesterday my mind instinctively turned to you. Fancy my reception here, and fancy those fellows at the London University conceiving a man of my misfortunes would have injured the religious and moral purity of their character, if I had lectured there. 'An ounce and three-quarters of civet,' or rather a couple of pounds."

The poet replied in a cordial letter of congratulation and advice, wishing only that "your pencil (for that, after all, is the tool you were made for) met with the encouragement it so deserves."

Haydon and Wordsworth maintained a basic friendship for thirty-seven years. For long periods they had no contact, but in these latter years they did see each other from time to time. In 1842 the poet was seventy-two; Haydon, fifty-six. Whatever differences they may have had were forgotten. They went to church several times together, and the painter found his old friend "dearer than ever and more venerable." Then one day Wordsworth called to sit for a portrait, a "poetical one" which Haydon had promised to paint. This was the admirable *Wordsworth ascending Helvellyn*, now in the National Portrait Gallery. "We talked of our merry time with C. Lamb and John Keats. He then fell asleep, and so

⁹He was also highly honored in 1844 when he was invited to deliver a series of lectures at the Royal Institution in London to an audience of "people of fashion, . . . where Davy, Coleridge and Campbell lectured before me."

did I nearly, it was so hot; but I suppose we are getting dozy." Two days later, on June 16, Wordsworth sat again; and this time they had a good "set-to." "His knowledge of Art is extraordinary," Haydon wrote. "He detects errors in hands like a connoisseur or artist. We spent a very pleasant morning. We talked again of our old friends, and to ascertain his real height I measured him, and found him, to my wonder, eight heads high, or 5 ft. 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ in., and of very fine, heroic proportions. He made me write them down, in order, he said, to show Mrs. Wordsworth my opinion of his proportions."

They met for the last time three years later. Wordsworth, now poet laureate, had come up to London to attend the state ball. Haydon quizzed him about it:

Dear old Wordsworth called, looking hearty and strong. "I came up to go to the state ball," said he, "and the Chancellor . . . told me at the ball I ought to go to the levee." "And will you put on a court dress?" said I. "Why?" "Let me see you and I'll write you a sonnet." Wordsworth did not like this.

On May 16, Haydon had from Talfourd a description of the affair:

He said that Wordsworth went to court in Rogers's clothes, buckles and stockings, and wore Davy's sword. Moxon had hard work to make the dress fit. It was a squeeze, but by pulling and hauling they got him in. Fancy the high priest of mountain and of flood on his knees in a court, the quiz of courtiers, in a dress that did not belong to him, with a sword that was not his own and a coat which he had borrowed.

Feeling thus strongly about it, Haydon wrote his old friend a letter: "I wish you had not gone to court . . . I think of you as Nature's high priest. I can't bear to associate a bag-wig and sword, ruffles and buckles, with Helvellyn and the mountain solitudes. This is my feeling, and I regret if I have rubbed yours the wrong way . . . I have not been able to suppress my feelings. Believe me ever your old friend." How the poet regarded this letter we do not know; but as to his appearance at court, he was quite complacent.

On at least two occasions Wordsworth expressed his opinion of the painter. Two years after Haydon's death, he told Frederic who was visiting the poet, his godfather, at Rydal Mount: "your father was a fine, frank, generous nature, a capital talker, and well-

informed." And as to his art, he continued, "He is the first painter in his grand style of art that England or any other country has produced since the days of Titian. He may be disregarded and scorned now by the ignorant and the malevolent, but posterity will do him justice. There are things in his work that have never been surpassed, they will be the textbook of art hereafter."

Perhaps on this occasion he was suiting his remarks to his auditor, but it is apparent that for almost forty years he had valued Haydon's acquaintance and respected his talents. Of the painter's stability and common sense he had, however, more reason to be doubtful. In 1841 he had written to Professor Henry Reed, his American editor:

Haydon is bent upon coming to Rydal next summer, with a view to paint a likeness of me, not as a mere matter-of-fact portrait, but one of a poetical character. . . . I am rather afraid, I own, of any attempt of this kind, notwithstanding my high opinion of his ability; but if he keeps in his present mind, which I doubt, it will be in vain to oppose his inclination. He is a great enthusiast, possessed also of a most active intellect, but he wants that submissive and steady good sense which is absolutely necessary for the adequate development of power in that art to which he is attached.

It is difficult to understand why this friendship continued so long. Perhaps it was because they saw each other so seldom; perhaps, in the end, the explanation lies in Haydon's remark: "We talked again of our old friends." For each of them had loved or known Lamb and Coleridge, John Scott and Sir Walter Scott, Hazlitt, Wilkie, and Keats. And no doubt as they grew older, the thought of their past years did indeed "breed perpetual benediction," and bind them more closely.

Near the close of 1838, Haydon was overjoyed to obtain a commission at 600 guineas (later reduced to 400) from a "body of gentlemen" at Liverpool to paint the picture he had projected four years earlier, *The Duke of Wellington musing on the Field of Waterloo*.¹⁰ This painting, it will be recalled, had been superseded by *The Imperial Guard musing* when the Duke's stiffness regarding the loan of his clothes had made Haydon cancel his original plan.

¹⁰ Sometimes entitled *A Hero and the Horse which carried him in his greatest battle, imagined to be on the field again twenty years after*. The popular engraving by Thomas Goff Lupton was entitled *The Hero and his Horse*.

Now that the project had the respectable backing of the Liverpool gentlemen, however, the Duke was no longer disposed to be completely uncooperative, and Haydon was able to proceed.

But there were still difficulties regarding clothes and accouterments. The Duke had a settled aversion to lending his possessions to artists; and Haydon was put to no little trouble and expense in his efforts to obtain properties and to make his details authentic, including a brief trip with Mary to Waterloo, Brussels, and Antwerp to absorb atmosphere.¹¹ There ensued a series of letters between the painter and his subject, the Duke continuing to insist that he "had no knowledge whatever of the composition or subject of the picture for which he is to sit, excepting that it is for the committee of gentlemen at Liverpool, who have desired that he should sit to Mr. Haydon." At last, his patience worn thin, he wrote the painter, hoping "that he will have some cessation of note-writing about pictures. . . . In all events, he must decline to lend anybody his clothes, arms and equipments."¹²

Finally, however, a date was set, and Haydon was invited to come to Walmer Castle. There, for four "immortal" days, he observed at close hand the daily life of one whom he regarded as the greatest of living men.

The first night's talk found Haydon an attentive observer and listener.

The Duke said the natural state of man was plunder . . . and he thought we were coming to the natural state of society very fast. . . . I studied his fine head intensely. Arbuthnot had begun to doze. I was like a lamp newly trimmed, and could have listened all night. The Duke gave a tremendous yawn, and said: "It is time to go to bed." Candles were rung for. He took

¹¹He was perhaps disappointed to learn the authoritative answer to one of his inquiries. Colonel John Gurwood, who had been severely wounded at Waterloo and was now serving the Duke as his private secretary, informed the painter that: "the Duke of Wellington never took off his hat to cheer on the troops on any one occasion. . . . I should say that his Grace never placed himself in a theatrical position, which might be paintable as a *fact*. . . ."

¹²Although Haydon does not seem to have been fully aware of it, the Duke of Wellington did not think very highly of art or artists. In his *Reminiscences*, Solomon Hart tells the story of the Duke's purchase of Sir William Allan's painting, *The Battle of Waterloo from the French Side*. When Wellington had difficulty in finding banknotes to pay the painter, Allan suggested a check. "The Duke, somewhat nettled, replied, 'Do you think I do not know what I am about? Do you think I want the clerks at Coutts's to know that I have been such a damned fool as to give one thousand guineas for a picture?'"

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two, and lighted them himself. The rest lighted their own. The Duke took one and gave me (being the stranger) the other, and led the way. At an old view of Dover, in the hall, he stopped and explained about the encroachments of the sea. I studied him again—we all held up our candles. Sir Astley [Cooper] went to Mr. Pitt's bedroom, and said: "God bless your Grace." They dropped off—his Grace, I and the valet going on. I came to my room, and said: "God bless your Grace." I saw him go into his. When I got to bed I could not sleep. Good God, I thought, here am I *tete-a-tete* with the greatest man on earth—the conqueror of Napoleon—sitting with him, talking to him, sleeping near him! . . . I am deeply interested, and passionately affected. God bless his Grace, I repeat.

The next day, the Duke sat. "Does the light hurt your Grace's eyes?" 'Not at all': and he stared at the light as much as to say: 'I'll see if you shall make me give in, Signor Light.' Clearly, the Duke offered a fine example of Decision of Character. The next day was Sunday, and Haydon sat with the Duke and Mr. Arbuthnot in the Duke's pew. He was impressed by his Grace's simplicity in worship. On Monday when he sat, the Duke seemed weary and ill, "like an aged eagle beginning to totter from his perch," Haydon wrote. On Tuesday, the painter returned to London, and by the end of the following month the picture was finished.¹³

Haydon had planned to write his "*Life and Correspondence*" as early as 1832, but he did not actually commence it until 1841. By the time of his death he had brought his story down almost to 1821. There the *Autobiography* ends.

To the student of Haydon or of his period, the *Autobiography* is a work of extraordinary interest. It was first published in 1853 as volume one of Tom Taylor's *Life*. So far as one knows, Taylor did not alter it in any way. In the second and third volumes of the *Life*, however, Taylor did of necessity exercise considerable editorial judgment in the inclusion and exclusion of materials from the journals. He also quite evidently made extensive mechanical corrections, for Haydon was not one to allow routine matters of punctuation and syntax to interfere with the free, passionate flow of his composition.

¹³This picture (or one of the two or more replicas of it that Haydon painted) is now at Liverpool College in a somewhat damaged state, as the Headmaster, R. G. Lunt, has kindly informed me.

It would probably not altogether surprise Haydon to learn that no small part of his after-fame is due to his writing. It is evident that in keeping his journal he had almost from the very beginning an idea of eventual publication. He was by no means unaware of the individual quality of his style and the interest that readers might find in the events and personalities that crowd his records. But above all he hoped that his mistakes would serve as a warning to the inexperienced, his "occasional triumphs, a stimulus to the persevering."

Throughout most of his life he was indefatigable as a penman. From 1809, when his "English Student" letters began to appear in the Hunts' *Examiner*, to the end of his days, he kept up a continual out-pouring of letters to magazines and newspapers. These, of course, are of little significance to his status as a writer. The same may be said of his pamphlets and descriptive catalogues (sixteen of which are in the British Museum) and his various contributions to the *Annals of the Fine Arts*. His stature as a man of letters must depend rather upon his published *Lectures*, and more especially upon the *Autobiography* and such portions of his journals and correspondence as his editors have made available to us.

The *Lectures on Painting and Design* were well reviewed at the time of their publication; and even today they will be found to have moments of real value and interest. The first volume, which appeared in 1844 was "Dedicated to William Wordsworth, the poet, with affection, respect and admiration." The second volume, in 1846, was dedicated by permission to "His Grace the Duke of Sutherland, with respect and gratitude; A Patron and Friend 'When the whole world seemed adverse to desert.'"¹⁴

But such activities as lecturing and writing did not bring his painting to a standstill. While the pictures he produced during these latter years are not to be compared to his earlier achievements, they do have a certain interest.

On April 10, 1840, he rubbed in a picture of moderate size, *Mary Queen of Scots, when an Infant, stripped by order of Mary*

¹⁴Haydon contributed the article on "Painting" in the seventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in 1838. This was republished in Edinburgh the same year in a joint volume with Hazlitt's *Encyclopaedia* article "The Fine Arts." Neither essay has much to say to the modern reader.

of Guise, her mother, to convince Sadler the English ambassador that she was not a decrepid child, which had been insinuated at Court. This was completed in July 1841 and was shown at the Royal Academy Exhibition the following year, together with *The Black Prince*. Haydon's letter to Kirkup suggests that *Samson and Delilah* was also exhibited at that time.¹⁵

I have sent two historical pictures to the Exhibition of this year. They have hung them well,¹⁶ but would rather be without them. Never was the historical painter in a more unbecoming place than in the English Exhibition. Above my picture stands a lady in velvet: on the right, a view of the Kensington gravel pits; on the left, a favourite pony; and below, some dead mackerel; in the midst stands my "Samson and Delilah": and Samson, of course, looked like a maniac. And well he might!

Of my "Mary of Guise," they say the infant is not an "aristocratic one"! What of that? Do aristocratic babies never wet their napkins? Are they above digestion and its consequences, and do they smile with superior condescension and polished grace at a dose of castor oil? What next!

The idea for his new picture, *Alexander's Combat with the Lion*, had occurred to him in 1827 while he was painting *Alexander taming Bucephalus* for the Earl of Egremont. He began work on this second *Alexander* on January 24, 1842, with a prayer—like so many of his, unanswered—for a blessing on its "commencement, progression, and conclusion," pleading "that this work may advance the feeling of my great country for high and moral Art, and that I may not be taken till Art be on a firm foundation, never to recede, and that I may realize all my imagination hoped in early youth, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

When it was finally finished, almost two years later, he took it to the British Institution to prepare it for exhibition there. The following passage from the journals is characteristic:

I carried my lunch with me, and did what no mortal ever did before in that room, broiled it on the coals, and with a pint of the coldest pump water lunched heartier than the Queen. It was the south room, where all that were illustrious and great have walked on those splendid nights we used to have—

¹⁵This does not agree with other accounts and records and seems unlikely.

¹⁶On May 8, 1842, Haydon wrote Howard, the Keeper, thanking him for the "handsome way" in which his picture had been hung. "It is to be regretted that in early life," he concluded, "when I had given every proof of diligence and obedience as a student, kindness of this nature was not thought the fairest way to reward me."

Davy, Wilkie, Talma, Lamb, Hazlitt, Beaumont, Madame de Stael, Talleyrand, Canning, Wellington, Lady Jersey, and my own love, Mary. Such is human destiny! Alexander the Great was before me—a mutton chop on the coals. . . . My chop was cooked to a *tee*; I ate it like a Red Indian, and drank the cool translucent with a gusto a wine-connoisseur knows not. I then thought the distant cloud was too much advanced; so toning it down with black I hit the mark, and pronounced the work done—*Io Poean!*—and I fell on my knees and thanked God, and bowed my forehead, and touched the ground, and sprung up, my heart beating at the anticipation of a greater work, and a more terrific struggle.

This is B. R. Haydon—the *real* man—may he live a thousand years! and here he sneezed—lucky!

Thus did B. R. Haydon—the *real* man—so valiant, so pathetic—strive to reassure himself that God was on his side, that triumph he must. But the augury proved false. The British Institution did not like his picture, and the Directors refused it a place in the Exhibition. Haydon sent it to the Pantheon, and there it remained unsold at the time of his death. In his will, he valued it at 300 guineas.

It is not difficult to account for the failure of this picture. While he was painting it, he was also working on *Curtius*, a far more creditable performance; he was manufacturing replicas in quantity, and was preparing his cartoons for the Westminster competition. In addition to his normal harassment regarding money, he was especially concerned at this time over the expenses involved in educating his sons, Frank and Frederic. It is little wonder, then, that this *Alexander* was one of his worst failures. It has, mercifully, dropped out of sight; but the Redgraves' description of it in *A Century of Painters of the English School*, where it is referred to as *The Lion Hunt*, will give a sufficient notion of its absurdities:

. . . the drawing of the principal figure, and of the horse on which he rides, is most careless and incorrect; the head of the man is far too big for his body, the arms too weak for the lower limbs, the horse much too small to carry the man, who sits quite on his neck, and is so evidently too heavy for the animal, that it is quite weighed down in the hind quarters, not by the attack of the lion, but by the weight of the warrior. Like its rider the horse has too big a head, which is moreover fitted on to a short neck that the lion-killer's face may not be hidden; it has opened its jaws so wide as to include nearly half the neck of the lion within its teeth, while, with the hind legs almost paralyzed, it stands firmly enough on one fore leg to

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be able to twist the other over the lion's flank and to place it on the opposite flank. Another rider comes up in such hot haste to the aid of the first, that he has either run his horse and himself against the trunk of a tree, or else Haydon thought he had had trouble enough with the heads of one warrior and one horse, and deliberately blotted out the other two by painting the trunk completely across them; added to this the whole work is heavy and coarse, without style and without execution.

Curtius leaping into the Gulf, a large canvas, was begun on January 27, 1842, three days after the rubbing in of *Alexander*. It was completed in December and exhibited at the British Institution the following February. This picture, perhaps the best of those he painted during his later years, had a varied history. Although Haydon recorded in his journal that he had sold it on May 3, 1843 ("but got a bill at six months, which in the city is awful"), he listed it in his will as still in his possession, though at the Pantheon with Newton's lien of £80 against it. For many years it adorned the billiard saloon of Gatti's Restaurant in the Strand. It is now at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter.

A. C. Sewter finds *Curtius* "to possess tremendous vigor and vehemence of action strongly recalling Delacroix. It is a projection on to a heroic level of his own increasing despair—a private emotion, not a political one—and consequently expressed not realistically but in the grand manner of romantic individualism." And it is, of course, altogether possible that Haydon, increasingly preoccupied with the idea of self-destruction, found something especially appealing in the suicide of the heroic Roman as, fully armed, on horseback, he plunged into the chasm. We do know that he painted his own head as Curtius.

Haydon's devotion to his children, his willingness to sacrifice his time, his pride, and his money for them, is never better illustrated than during the last eight years of his life. He was determined that his two surviving boys, Frank Scott and Frederic Wordsworth, should receive every advantage he could afford, and some he obviously could not. Frederic, to his father's great pride, had decided to enter the Navy; this required special preparatory training, which occasioned a certain amount of sacrifice, heartache, and expense. But the painter felt well repaid when Frederic passed his examina-

tions and in 1841 became a midshipman in Her Majesty's Service. In the meantime, however, he had been forced to sell the copyright of one of his most popular paintings, *Wellington Musing*, "to fit out my boys." For this he received £200—the publisher, he felt, would make thousands.

Frank was more of a problem. His father described him as "Handsome, intellectual, witty, and mathematical," but it is evident that he was also high-strung and erratic. Having shown an "invincible . . . passion for engineering," in 1839 he was sent to Sir William Fairbairn, Manchester industrialist and engineer whom Haydon had met during a lecture tour, to be prepared for that profession. But it did not work out; instead he returned home and was entered at Cambridge for the October term, 1841. This, of course, required additional tutoring, an expense the painter could ill afford.

Frank did well at Jesus College, but the payment of his fees kept Haydon continually embarrassed. On June 9, 1842, for example, when his financial condition was again approaching disaster, he

Painted a Napoleon musing (front) and sold it for twenty guineas, all in six hours. . . . I was out to-day to beg mercy of a lawyer for £8, 2s, 6d., who gave me till ten to-morrow. I then came home, and touched at Napoleon and completed it, ignorant how I was to keep the promise. At four I was out again to defer £25. Came home to dine. Dined; as I was promised peace to-morrow till half-past eight in the evening.

My friend came in the evening, and paid me £10, half for Napoleon. Thus I clear off £8, 2s. 6d. How I am to manage the £25, or £56, 3s. 8d., for Frank's college bill, I know not.

Lord Brougham has helped me for the last with half, £16 the balance of £87. Dear Mary raised £10 on her watch for Frank, and I £10 more, so we brought him clear home, crowned as first prizeman in mathematics at Jesus, first year, but were drained.

When he left Cambridge with a B.A. in 1845, Frank did not enter the ministry as had been intended, "shrinking," as his father put it, "from the display of the pulpit." Instead, Haydon had to solicit Sir Robert Peel to find a post for him. Through Peel's influence he was appointed to a junior clerkship in the Record Office in Chancery Lane at a salary of £80 a year. The work proved congenial to one of his "retiring and literary" habits, and in time he became senior clerk and ultimately assistant keeper.

There is nothing to show that Haydon complained at this outcome. But the £860, 10s. which Frank's education had cost, and which his father had wrung from God knows where, can have brought the painter little satisfaction. When Miss Mitford read Taylor's *Life*, she was highly indignant. "That ——— seems to have been as bad as ——— or worse," she wrote Mr. Bennoch; "what business had he to go to College, when he must have known how matters were with his father!—And then to throw away the £850 spent upon his College life!—If he had gone into a merchant's office, I should have honoured him, or if he had stuck to engineering."

In 1841 it must have seemed to Haydon that the rulers of England had at last perceived the light he had so long been striving to reveal to them. For in that year a Fine Arts Committee was appointed to look into the matter of decorating the Houses of Parliament. The Committee examined a great many witnesses, but Haydon was not called, which led him to suspect that he would not be employed when the time came. In November, Sir Robert Peel, the Prime Minister, obtained the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire further into the decoration of the Houses. The membership of this Commission was impressive indeed; Prince Albert was at its head and Charles Eastlake, the only professional artist in the group, was secretary.

The inglorious history of this Royal Commission, which bungled along for twenty years, has been related in detail by the Redgraves and others, and need not be rehearsed here. In its early stages, the Commission evidently felt that it was about to inaugurate a new and golden era in English art; and there were those, including Haydon, who wished desperately to share this belief. In the spring of 1842, the Commission issued a notice of a cartoon competition to be held the following year. The purpose of this was to determine whether English artists were capable of producing pictures suitable for decorating the Houses in fresco.

Haydon had been feverishly studying, practising, lecturing on, and preaching the gospel of fresco; he felt himself more competent in that medium than any living Englishman. When the competition was announced, he rejoiced exceedingly; and once he had finished *Saragossa*, he set to work on his two competing cartoons: *The Curse on Adam and Eve* and *The Black Prince entering London in Triumph*.

In the midst of all his worries and activities, he completed these cartoons in March 1843, and on June 1 he placed them in Westminster Hall where with the other entries they would be judged. This was to be the opportunity he had courted so long. Under his leadership, English artists would now be able to show the world their competence to achieve great designs and high accomplishments.

But in his heart, Haydon was not confident. Well he realized that he was no longer the young titan who had dazzled the world with *Solomon* and *Jerusalem* and *Lazarus*. He was fifty-seven now, and in spite of his continued shouts of self-encouragement, no longer the ebullient genius he had once fancied himself. For all his ability at self-deception, he must have realized into what a shoddy business his painting had degenerated. "The art with me is becoming a beastly vulgarity," he wrote in 1844. "The solitary grandeur of historical painting is gone."

With these awful doubts of his own competence was mixed a strange belated sense of sin.

June 17th. [1843]—Perhaps God may punish me, as he did Napoleon, as an example, for pursuing a great object with less regard to moral principle than became a Christian,—that is, raising money to get through, careless of the means of repaying. . . .¹⁷

I have made up my mind to a reverse. Though I trust in God with confidence, yet I am not sure I am yet sufficiently cleansed by adversity not to need more of it. For the sake of my boys, and only daughter, and, above all, for the sake of my dear Mary, I hope not. . . .

June 18th.—Went to church at St. George's, Hanover Square, and felt the most refreshing assurance of protection and victory. The last time I was there I received the Sacrament and did not give my only sovereign as I ought, which gave me great pain. To-day, when the Dean of Carlisle implored assistance for the Church Fund . . . I thought I'd give 1s., then 2s. 6d., 10s, 6d. At last said a voice within me, "That sovereign you ought to have given." "I will," I felt, and took it out and gave it to the plate with as pure a feeling as ever animated a human breast. O God, prosper it! Thus have I expiated my neglect.

The Cartoon Exhibition was to open July 3. A week before the opening, Eastlake informed Haydon that his cartoons had failed to receive an award.

¹⁷This is very similar to the central idea of "Last thoughts of B. R. Haydon, half-past ten," which he composed a few minutes before his death.

It is not pleasant to contemplate the effect of this blow upon the painter. Taylor describes it as mortal, and he may well be right. For two days Haydon made no entry in his journal. On July 1 he wrote:

A day of great misery. I said to my dear love, "I am not included." Her expression was a study. She said, "We shall be ruined." I looked up my lectures, papers and journals, and sent them to my dear Aeschylus Barrett, with two jars of oil (1816), twenty-seven years old. I burnt loads of private letters, and prepared for executions. Lords Alford and Northampton and William Hamilton took additional shares in Saragossa. £7 was raised on my daughter's and Mary's dresses.

On Monday I went down and was astonished at the power displayed. There were cartoons equal to any school. My own looked grand, like the effusion of a master, soft and natural, but not hard and definite; too much shadow for fresco;¹⁸ fit for oil; but there were disproportions. I gained great knowledge. The Death of Lear, Alfred in the Danish Camp, Constance, were never exceeded.

William Bell Scott, also an unsuccessful competitor, saw him there. Scott, too, found the exhibition astonishing in the quantity and high excellence of the English historic art displayed. But there was one distressing feature of the exhibition which Scott, for all his dislike of Haydon, could record only with regret. That was the figure of Haydon himself.

He walked about like a man in a dream, now and then waking up, affecting an amused manner, then again collapsing. He, the father and master in this country of high art,—not only the master indeed, but apostle and martyr,—found himself surrounded by works more "scholastic," "academic," and so forth, than his own, executed by dozens of young men who had grown up unknown to him, and to whom he was apparently unknown. Every competition has its dark side: dark with a red light as of the nether pit shining through it. Youth can stand much, it takes a great deal to kill at twenty-five, but this veteran on that day was one of the most melancholy of spectacles.

¹⁸A. P. Oppé has remarked on the changes in style which were taking place about the middle of the century, when the "dark and shadowed manner" was being supplanted by the "silvery." "The competition for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament gave [chiaroscuro] a death-blow. . . . The battle which raged between oil and fresco was really a contest between the white picture and the dark. . . . When Haydon adopted the new method [fresco] and attempted to carry out in it conceptions which belonged to the old order, his works stood out at once as hopelessly old-fashioned. His suicide was the end of an epoch, Ruskin's denunciations of the dark picture scarcely more than an epitaph."

It would be pleasant to record that Haydon accepted his defeat gracefully, bit the bullet, and shrugged off one more failure. But this he was unable to do. This time he had sustained more than a flesh wound. His self-esteem had been destroyed. In time, he half-convinced himself that he was once more the victim of a great conspiracy; this, no doubt, lay back of his later decision, a fatal one, to go it on his own. But he was pathetic, nonetheless. On one occasion he was seen, seated alone in a restaurant, quietly weeping over a bottle of wine. On another, lecturing at the Richmond Literary and Scientific Institution, he burst into tears and the lecture had to be brought abruptly to a close.

Haydon's black mood did not lift. Once he "spent a whole day with a lion, and came home with a contempt for the human species." One would like to have been there to observe the incident. "Before the day was over we got intimate. He showed me his hideous teeth, and affectionately leaned his head aside as I patted him, suffered me to touch his paw and smooth his mane. The lioness was in heat, and as playful as a kitten, and on my stooping down to get my portcrayon gave me an affectionate pat on the head like the blow of a sledge-hammer, but luckily I had my hat on." One night Rossi's daughter called, to beg a half-crown.¹⁹ Would Haydon's loved ones come to this? He called on Lucas, the portrait painter, a former darling of society, and found him neglected. He began to regret that he had not gone to Europe where, he felt sure, his genius for high art would have been appreciated. For, he wrote Kirkup, he had begun to lose his respect for his native land: "I declare to God there is actually more suffering, more ruin, more agony, more want, more injustice, more corruption, more hypocrisy in this England than in any two countries in Europe."

As to his profession:

The greatest curse that can befall a father in England is to have a son gifted with a passion and a genius for High Art. Thank God with all my soul and all my nature, my children have witnessed the harassing agonies under which I have ever painted; and the very name of painting, the very name of High Art, the very thought of a picture, gives them a hideous and disgusting taste in their mouths. Thank God, not one of my boys, nor my

¹⁹Rossi was the Royal Academician who had been Haydon's landlord in 1823. After his death in 1839, the Academy allowed his widow a pension of 16s. a week.

FORENSIC INTERLUDE

girl, can draw a straight line, even with a ruler, much less without one. And I pray God, on my knees, with my forehead bent to the earth, and my lips to the dust, that He will, in His mercy, afflict them with every other passion, appetite, or misery, with wretchedness, disease, insanity, or gabbling idiotism, rather than a longing for painting—that scorned, miserable art, that greater imposture than the human species it imitates.

And there were other disquieting thoughts. “What I fear,” he wrote in his journal on January 9, 1843, “is that my thinking always under the harrow of pecuniary necessity will at last affect my understanding. I trust in God; but to-day I had a dullness of brain and torpor of thought quite frightful.” “It may be laid down,” he had written some months before, “that self-destruction is the physical mode of relieving a diseased brain, because the first impression of a brain diseased . . . is the necessity of this horrid crime.” Then in December 1845 he learned that Colonel Gurwood had cut his throat. “Good heavens! . . . The man who had headed the forlorn hope at Ciudad Rodrigo, the rigid soldier, the iron-nerved hero, had not morale to resist the relaxation of nerve brought on by his over-anxiety about the Duke’s Despatches!

“Where is the responsibility of a man with mind so easily affected by body? Romilly, Castlereagh and Gurwood!” These were black thoughts indeed, and he was shocked by their implications.

Triumph of Tom Thumb

1845-1846

IN 1840, the print of Haydon's imaginative picture, *Wellington Musing on the Field of Waterloo*, had inspired his old friend Wordsworth to write him another sonnet: "By Art's bold privilege, Warrior and War-Horse stand," which he composed, as was his wont, while climbing Helvellyn. Two years later, Haydon's portrait of *Wordsworth ascending Helvellyn* inspired a new friend, Elizabeth Barrett, to indite yet another.

Wordsworth upon Helvellyn! Let the cloud
Ebb audibly along the mountain wind,
Then break against the rock, and show behind
The lowland valleys floating up to crowd
The sense with beauty. He with forehead bowed
And humble-lidded eyes, as one inclined
Before the sovran thoughts of his own mind,
And very meek with inspirations proud,
Takes here his rightful place, as poet-priest,
By the high altar, singing praise and prayer
To the yet higher heavens. A vision free
And noble, Haydon, hath thine art released.
No portrait this with academic air,
This is the poet and his poetry.

Haydon, of course, was proud to transmit the sonnet to Wordsworth who in turn wrote his appreciation to its author. He could not, however, refrain from pointing out one or two flaws. The word *ebb* in line 2, he felt, was obscure; and lines 11 and 12 would be clarified by the addition of a redundant syllable: "*By a vision*" etc.¹

¹Miss Barrett did not adopt these suggestions. She did, however, rephrase the lines:
"To the higher Heavens. A noble vision free
Our Haydon's hand has flung out from the mist!"

The friendship of Haydon and Elizabeth Barrett had begun in 1842, through their mutual friend Miss Mitford. Curiously, they never met face to face, but for three years they corresponded with some frequency, and a feeling of understanding and respect grew up between them. In spite of the disparity in ages, background, temperament, and experience, they shared, as Miss Shackford has pointed out, a surprising number of common interests and enthusiasms. Miss Barrett, his "dear Aeschylus Barrett," was devoted to Plato and the Greek tragic poets and could understand the painter's reverence for the Age of Pericles and Phidias. They also shared a love of poetry, especially that of Keats and Wordsworth, both of whom Haydon had known as intimate friends. Their religious views were not dissimilar: both were evangelically inclined and ardently devotional.

Miss Barrett, as a semi-invalid, was of course, unable to view Haydon's paintings on public display, but he frequently sent drawings and even paintings to her home for her enjoyment. It was such a viewing of the *Wordsworth*, in an unfinished state, that had inspired her sonnet. And when arrests threatened, as they did so often during those latter years, he was not above sending treasured possessions to her for safe-keeping. After his death, this very nearly proved embarrassing, but her friends saw to it that she escaped any consequences.

Their correspondence makes interesting reading. Haydon's letters, those that survive, were frank and breezy; they must have been stimulating to the shut-in. Too often, perhaps, he indulged himself in complaint and self-pity; but when he did, his correspondent would reply with a fine blend of judicious sympathy and firm common sense. As Miss Shackford says, Miss Barrett, while responsive and sympathetic, "yet never [was] betrayed into any departure from her watchful rationality."

Their correspondence apparently came to an end in November 1845. In the last letter which Miss Barrett addressed to Haydon, she discussed mesmerism and telepathy in a manner which suggests that she was being won over to a belief in these current fads. We know that Haydon, although as superstitious as the next man, was, like Robert Browning in later years, scornful of the various quasi-

occult crazes of the mid-century. We do not have his reply to her letter, but it may perhaps have served to cool their correspondence. It is certain, however, that they did not quarrel. At the end, he looked to her as one of his dearest and most trusted friends.

During 1844, Haydon had commenced two pictures, *George IV and Wellington visiting Waterloo* and *Uriel revealing himself to Satan*. The first of these was completed within the year. He found no purchaser for it, but his two new patrons, Francis Bennoch and Richard Twentyman, silk agents and wholesale dealers in gimp, of Wood Street, Cheapside,² advanced him £100. Obviously suggested by the earlier *Wellington Musing*, it pictures George IV and the Duke on the battlefield during an imagined visit in 1821. Wellington, full face, is explaining the battle to the King, who is seen in profile. Both men are in civilian dress and are mounted. A cenotaph appears in the background, left. This picture, now at the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, while certainly not a distinguished work of art, is in fact a spirited and effective performance, with little of the distortion or disproportion one comes to expect in Haydon's later painting.

Uriel and Satan was completed early in 1845. Haydon had found a purchaser at 200 guineas. Mr. Dennys was a cotton-printer, one of the new class of patrons developed by the age of steam. He was eager for Haydon to exhibit his painting at the Royal Academy. The painter showed considerable reluctance, but finally agreed to send it in, "though [to do so] is an insult to them and a disgrace to me." Considerably to his surprise it was well hung and, at least by the *Illustrated London News*, well received, the reviewer not only praising the picture but including a good sized reproduction of it. Said he:

The works of the two great anti-Academicians, [John] Martin and Haydon, are hung together in the West Room. . . . Mr. Haydon's subject

²Regarding Wood Street, consult Wordsworth's poem, "The Reverie of Poor Susan." Of Bennoch, William Bell Scott says, somewhat churlishly: "This individual actually had an idea that he was a poet, and that Haydon, as he had been the friend, though not a very good one, of Keats and Wordsworth, should also be his." Both Bennoch and Twentyman were evidently liberal men who encouraged and sometimes fed artists. According to Eric George, Twentyman emigrated to Australia in 1846 or 1847, taking some of Haydon's paintings, including *Aristides* and *Nero*, with him.

TRIUMPH OF TOM THUMB

is from the third book of "Paradise Lost." . . . Mr. Haydon in this picture has studied Fuseli to some purpose. In the figure of the "stripling cherub" he has had his eye on the old masters; but his picture (and he will thank us for our criticism) is altogether out of place in the present Exhibition. "How hard it is upon us," was the remark of a great painter who had studied his art more deeply than many of his brethren, "the better fitted we become for the company of the great masters, the less fitted we are for the walls of a modern exhibition."

The Times agreed in praising *Uriel and Satan* as high and noble art, but the *Post* was scornful. Thackeray, in *Fraser's*, under his pseudonym "Michel Angelo Titmarsh," was amused by the painting but, perhaps in spite of himself, a little impressed, too.

It roars out to you . . . "Come and look at me." A broad-shouldered, swaggering, hulking archangel, with those rolling eyes and distended nostrils which belong to the species of sublime caricature, stands scowling on a sphere from which the devil has just descended bound earthwards. Planets, comets, and other astronomical phenomena, roll and blaze round the pair and flame in the new blue sky. There is something burly and bold in this resolute genius which will attack only enormous subjects, which will deal with nothing but the epic, something respectable even in the defeats of such characters. . . . [Do not be too ready to laugh at Haydon;] give him credit for his great earnestness of purpose. I begin to find the world growing more pathetic daily, and laugh less every year of my life. Why laugh at idle hopes, or vain purposes, or utter blundering self-confidence? Let us be gentle with them henceforth, who knows whether there may not be something of the sort *chez nous*?

Dennys, in any event, was proud of *Uriel* and had a special gallery built for it in his house. Haydon was grateful that God had raised him up a patron who could appreciate it.

But his failure in the cartoon competition continued to weigh on his mind. He could not allow himself to believe that his cartoons had been rejected upon their merits. No, it must be that the shadowy forces against which he had battled a lifetime had once more conspired to crush him. There remained for him one last recourse. In his lectures he had gone over the heads of the official powers in art to appeal to "honest John Bull." And how gloriously the common men had responded! Perhaps this was the time to invoke the newly awakened enthusiasm for art among the masses in the cause of justice. With the sure taste and instinctive wisdom of the unsophis-

ticated, the people would recognize the superiority of his grand designs which the venal judges had rejected.

And thus reasoning, he was vouchsafed a sign. He was in Liverpool lecturing. On March 24, 1844, "just at the break of day I awoke, and felt as if a heavenly choir was leaving my slumbers as day dawned, and had been hanging over and inspiring me whilst I slept. I had not dreamt, but heard the inspiration . . . that sort of audible whisper Socrates, Columbus and Tasso heard: 'Why do you not paint your own six designs for the House on your own foundation, and exhibit them?' . . . I knelt up in my bed and prayed heartily to accomplish them, whatever might be the obstruction, as I had got through my other works. I will begin them as my next great works; I feel as if they will be my last, and I think I shall then have done my duty. . . . If this be delusion, so was Columbus's voice in the roaring of the Atlantic winds; but neither was, and under the blessing of God the result shall show it as to myself—but only under His blessing."

When he returned to London and the eternal round of money matters, he thought further of the plan, and on October 24 set up the canvas for the first of the series of six large pictures he had resolved to paint. This was *The Banishment of Aristides* which would illustrate the evils of popular government. It was followed by *Nero at the Burning of Rome*, showing, of course, the evils of despotism. The remaining four pictures would demonstrate the superiority of a limited monarchy over other forms of government.

In the midst of frantic labors, the painting of *Aristides* was accomplished in four months, *Nero* in two. Realizing that he could never continue to exist without a commission while painting the remaining subjects, he determined to exhibit *Aristides* and *Nero* at once. His family were not in favor of his making such a dangerous gamble, but opposition to his plans, as always, served only to strengthen his resolve. On January 12, 1846, he engaged rooms at the Egyptian Hall and wrote, "the die is cast!"

His opening advertisement, sent in on the 24th, consisted of a somewhat rambling tirade on modern tendencies in art of which he did not approve and an appeal to the public to support his forthcoming exhibition because of his great services to art. At the end

of March he sent Mary off to Brighton for her health, their first such parting in twenty-five years. By April 1, after the usual last minute borrowings, the exhibition was ready, with *Aristides*, *Nero*, and other pictures and drawings in place. The private day was set for Saturday, the 4th, the opening to the public on the 6th. But Haydon was worried—there had been several unpropitious omens. "After this what success can come? Do I believe this, or don't I? Half inclined."

It rained all day on April 4, 1846, the private day, and only four persons accepted Haydon's invitations: he had sent out several hundred. On the 6th he inserted an advertisement in *The Times*:

Haydon's New Pictures Open for Exhibition This Day, at 10 o'clock, at the Egyptian-hall, being two of the series designed to illuminate the best government for man, for the Old House, and adapted for the New one. Admission, 1s.; catalogues 6d. Upstairs to the right.

The receipts that day were £1, 1s. 6d.; on the 7th, £1, 8s. 6d.; on the 8th, £1, 6s. 6d.; and so it went.

The Egyptian Hall, which no longer stands, had been used by Haydon on three previous occasions when he exhibited *Jerusalem*, *Lazarus*, and *The Mock Election*. But it was not primarily an art gallery. Its various rooms were available for the exhibition of all sorts of oddities and freaks. In 1821, the alabaster sarcophagus which Haydon later inspected at Sir John Soane's was on display there; in 1822, a family of Laplanders; in 1844, a party of Ojibway-Indians. Chang and Eng, the original Siamese twins, were the outstanding attraction at the Egyptian Hall in 1829; a model of the Battle of Waterloo, nine years later. In January 1846, some Londoners paid to see "Mr. Carter's Mammoth Horse"; and in April, "For a short time only.—The greatest Curiosity in the World . . . the POLAR DOG, taken from an iceberg in the Arctic Seas." But by all odds the greatest attraction ever shown at the Egyptian Hall was presented to the eager public during April and May of that year, with a fanfare of advertisements of which the following is typical:

GENERAL TOM THUMB'S Farewell Levees at the Egyptian Hall—On account of the unprecedented success and crowded state of the room at each Levee, the Little General begs respectfully to inform the Nobility, Gentry,

and Public, that he will continue to appear Every Day and Evening, in all the Costumes and Performances in which he had the honour of appearing three times before her Majesty, and at all the principal Courts of Europe. . . . Admission, 1s.; Children under Ten years of age, Half-price. . . .

Phineas Taylor Barnum, the American entrepreneur and impresario, opened the exhibition of his prodigious midget on Easter Monday, April 13. He had taken the Great Room in Egyptian Hall, the room in which *Jerusalem*, twenty-six years before, had struck reverent awe in the breasts of at least some of its beholders. Now, Londoners flocked to see the little man. In the first week, Barnum is said to have grossed £600, and the furor over the General continued for months.

Meanwhile, Haydon's exhibition continued to go badly, even worse than he had feared. On April 11, he inserted a new advertisement in *The Times*—"to catch the *profanum vulgus*, . . . yet not a shilling more was added to the receipts."

. . . In these two magnificent pictures of the Burning of Rome by Nero and Banishment of Aristides "The drawing is grand and characters most felicitous, and we hope the artist will reap the reward he merits," says *The Times*, April 6. "These are Haydon's best works," says the *Herald* same day. N.B. Visitors are requested to go up into the gallery of the room, in order to see the full effect of the flame of the burning city. Nero accused the Christians of this cruel act; covered hundreds of them with combustible materials, and burnt them for the amusement of the savage Romans.—(See Tacitus.) Haydon has devoted 42 years to improve the taste of the people, and let every Briton who has pluck in his bosom and a shilling in his pocket crowd to his works during the Easter Week.³

Bayard Taylor, the American poet and journalist, had a ticket to Tom Thumb. Years later he recalled the glimpse he had had of Haydon on that occasion, standing outside the door of his exhibition rooms: "He was stout, broad-shouldered, about sixty years of age, rather shabbily dressed, with a general air of dilapidated power. There was something fierce and bitter in the expression of his face, as he glanced across to the groups hurrying to see Tom Thumb. . . . As the door opened I caught sight of *two* spectators within."

³The *Athenaeum*, after reviewing his pictures unfavorably, had this to say about the advertisement: "If this remarkable advertisement emanated from, or was sanctioned by, Mr. Haydon, it is quite obvious that, in the course of the forty-two years which he has devoted to improve the taste of the people, he has very much neglected his own."

To the painter, what was happening seemed fantastically unreal: "They rush by thousands to see Tom Thumb. They push, they fight, they scream, they faint, they cry help and murder! and oh! and ah! They see my bills, my boards, my caravans, and don't read them. Their eyes are open, but their sense is shut. It is an insanity, a *rabies*, a madness, a *furor*, a dream. I would not have believed it of the English people."

Obviously he should not continue. On April 16 he wrote: "My situation is now of more extreme peril than even when I began Solomon, thirty-three years ago." But still he allowed the exhibition to drag on. To escape this horror, he began to work furiously at the third picture of his series, *Alfred and the first British Jury*. He borrowed £2 more from a friend, G. J. Kemp, and sent the money to Mary at Brighton. On the 21st he wrote: "Tom Thumb had 12,000 people last week; B. R. Haydon, 133½ (the ½ a little girl). Exquisite taste of the English people! O God! bless me through the evils of this day."

Finally on May 18 he closed the exhibition with a loss of £111, 8s. 10d. In his journal, he compared his defeat to one of Napoleon's. "I have not decayed," he wrote, "but the people have been corrupted." Napoleon, he felt, facing a similar situation had acted more wisely. The following day with a kind of desperate bravado he added: "Next to a victory is a skilful retreat; and I marched out before General Thumb, a beaten but not conquered exhibitor."

The reviewers had not treated the exhibition altogether badly. *The Times* had been favorable, and the *Illustrated London News* had given *Aristides* a puff and an illustration. *Punch*, however, made fun of the complaining letter Haydon had written to *The Times* regarding the "Exquisite Feeling of the English People for High Art," and quoted a critic who, "speaking of Mr. Haydon's wonderful picture, *The Burning of Rome*, says: 'If Rome was anything like what Mr. Haydon has painted it, Nero has been shamefully abused for burning it.' " The tragi-comic aspects of the painter's failure did not escape George Cruikshank whose etching "Born a Genius and Born a Dwarf" in the *Comic Almanack* for 1846 contrasted a starving artist and an opulent midget.

In the meantime, Mary had returned from Brighton. The state

of her feelings can only be imagined. Their finances were a sham-bles. Her husband, refusing to acknowledge himself defeated, was blindly determined to complete another huge unsaleable picture: there was no longer even hope to sustain them. We have almost nothing of Mary's to let us know what she went through during all those years as the wife of B. R. Haydon, Historical Painter. That he adored her is evident—but the death of her children, the constant pressure of despair and shame and poverty—how can one ever comprehend the endurance of a soft and tender nature like Mary Haydon's? The painter does give us an occasional glimpse of his wife, but he is so completely preoccupied with his own tempestuous ups and downs that she appears but briefly—a lovely shadow who cares for the children; keeps the home together, nourished and sheltered somehow; and eternally waits there to solace her husband and bolster his battered ego each time he returns from the wars.

It is not that Haydon was unaware of his Mary's travail. When he wrote: "The struggle is severe; for myself, I care not, but for her so dear to me I feel," he was not speaking idly—but there were so many other things to occupy him, and Mary was not one to invite her husband or the world to witness her sorrow. One glimpse we do have, and it comes at this time. For her son Frederic, a midshipman on board H.M.S. *Grecian*, in South American waters, she wrote a birthday poem which, for all its amateurishness, shows what was really in her heart—as Haydon said, inserting it in his journal, "the inmost state of her soul, and what she really feels as to the danger of our position."⁴

TO AN ABSENT CHILD

This is thy natal day, my child;
 And where art thou so dear?
 My heart is sad, and yet 'tis glad
 To know thou art not here.
 Oh! tarry thou in sunny isles,
 Where winds and waves have borne thee;
 And return no more, to thy native shore,
 Where the care of years has worn thee. . . .

⁴Professor Pope has pointed out that Frederic's birthday was September 14, and that none of the Haydon children had been born in May. Haydon inserted the poem in his journal for May 16, 1846.

Oh! could I waft me to those bright isles,
 And dwell with thee, so dear!
 Should I sigh for this land of oppression and toil,
 Where each morn is expected with fear?

Then, pray for the day when we may dwell
 In that sunny land together,
 With those on earth we love so well,
 And never again come hither.

Mary Haydon, *Mère*.

For the painter, the next month was one of dazed desperation. Frederic Haydon tells us how his father was disappointed at this time by a friend who had offered to lend him £1000 and was unable to do so. He did receive a visit from his oldest friend, Samuel Prout, which must have cheered him for an hour or two. For Prout he took up his port-crayon and sketched a profile of himself. Under the portrait—a marvelous head, according to Prout—he wrote two Greek words meaning *meditating great things*. Sir Robert Peel sent him a check for £50: he was grateful, but too far gone in despair to be revived: he never cashed it. His mind clung to one idea: he must complete his six great pictures. June that year was unusually hot, and that added to his harassment. The final entries in his journal are evidence of the state of mind he was in at the end.

[June] 17th.—Dearest Mary, with a woman's passion, wishes me at once to stop payment, and close the whole thing. I will not. I will finish my six, under the blessing of God; reduce my expenses; and hope His mercy will not desert me, but bring me through in health and vigour, gratitude and grandeur of soul, to the end. In Him alone I trust. Let my imagination keep Columbus before my mind for ever. O God, bless my efforts with success, through every variety of fortune, and support my dear Mary and family. Amen.

In the morning, fearing I should be involved, I took down books I had not paid for to a young bookseller with a family, to return them. As I drove along, I thought I might get money on them. I felt disgusted at such a thought, and stopped and told him I feared I was in danger; and as he might lose, I begged him to keep them for a few days. He was grateful, and in the evening came this £50. *I know what I believe.*

18th.—O God, bless me through the evils of this day. Great anxiety. My landlord, Newton, called. I said "I see a quarter's rent in thy face; but none from me." I appointed to-morrow night to see him, and lay before

him every iota of my position. "Good hearted Newton!" I said, "don't put in an execution." "Nothing of the sort," he replied, half hurt.

I sent the Duke, Wordsworth, dear Fred's and Mary's heads, to Miss Barrett to protect. I have the Duke's boots and hat, and Lord Grey's coat, and some more heads.

20th.—O God, bless us all through the evils of this day. Amen.

21st.—Slept horribly. Prayed in sorrow, and got up in agitation.

22nd.—God forgive me. Amen.

Finis

of

B. R. Haydon

"Stretch me no longer on this rough world."—Lear

End of Twenty-sixth Volume.

This final entry was made between half past ten and a quarter to eleven on the morning of Monday, June 22, 1846.

The day before, Haydon and his elder son, Frank, had called on a family friend in Hampstead. As they walked through Regent's Park, the painter had spoken wildly, complaining of the intense heat and telling Frank that he had dwelt with pleasure on the idea of committing suicide. At dinner that evening he got up from the table and turned a glazed picture to the wall, saying the reflected light was too painful to endure. He looked flushed and haggard; he was heard walking about his room the entire night. Frank wanted to call in the family physician, but Mrs. Haydon refused to take her son's fears seriously.

That same evening Haydon had suggested to his wife that she go to Brixton the following morning to carry a message to David Coulton, the journalist, a family friend. Somewhat surprised, she had agreed to do so.

Monday morning was unusually oppressive; before noon the heat had become intense. Haydon arose early and went out. He walked to the shop of Riviere, a gunmaker in Oxford Street, and bought one of a pair of pistols of the smallest pocket size. At nine he returned, had breakfast, and went to his painting room on the first floor, locking the door as usual. A few minutes after ten, according to evidence given at the inquest, Mrs. Haydon passed the door and tried the lock. "Who's that?" the painter inquired rather loudly and hurriedly. His wife explained that she was about to

prepare for her visit to Brixton. "Oh, very well," he said; then, as she left the door, "God bless you! I will see you presently." In a few moments, Haydon followed her upstairs to her bedroom, where he repeated his message to Coulton and kissed her very fervently. Then he returned to his painting room.

Mrs. Haydon and her daughter Mary remained upstairs until about eleven. About 10:45 they were momentarily alarmed by the stifled report of a gun; but as troops were drilling in a park close at hand, they thought nothing of it. Within five minutes there was the sound of a heavy fall below, but that, too, was not unusual as Haydon frequently moved his heavy pictures about. Shortly after eleven, Mrs. Haydon left for Brixton.

At 12:15, Mary Haydon, age 22, knowing her father's despondency and hoping to cheer him, knocked at the door of his painting room. There was no reply. The door, she discovered, was unlocked; so she opened it and entered. At first she could see nothing, for when not painting Haydon kept the room in semi-darkness. Then she was aware of her father's figure crumpled on the floor. Rushing to him, she placed her hand on his face. It was cold. And suddenly she realized that she was standing in his blood.

Haydon had committed suicide. An examination by his physician showed that he had first fired a bullet into his head; then, when that had failed to kill him, he had slashed his throat twice with a razor. The bullet, which had been aimed downward, was found under the scalp and over the parietal bone, perfectly flattened by contact with the skull. The right jugular vein was nearly severed.

A grim eye-witness account of the scene in the painting room is given by Dr. John Elliotson, a believer in phrenology ("cerebral physiology") and mesmerism, one of the physicians summoned at the time of the suicide. Haydon had refused to take Elliotson's ideas on mesmerism seriously. In an article in *Zoist* (1854) the doctor had his say:

We found a gun-shot wound in the scalp at the lower and outer side of the right organ of the Love of Notoriety or Approbation,—or Vanity. . .

We found also a gash in the neck on each side, beginning very shallow and far back; and the right gash beginning in two places, shewing that he had no sooner begun to cut than he shifted and lowered the razor and began

again. . . . He cut so high as to have little chance of wounding the carotid artery, his study of anatomy availing him no more than it had done in his drawing. . . .

Imperfection in his art—inordinate vanity—selfishness—strong domestic affection—bitterness, moral unscrupulousness, which is surely unprincipledness—violence—only moderate intelligence, pharisaical airs, and superstition, characterized him. . . .

Thus the doctor concluded, having examined his phrenological “organs.”

The room had been carefully prepared, the stage set for this final act of his life. On the easel before him and spattered with his blood stood *Alfred and the first British Jury*, unfinished. A portrait of Mrs. Haydon was on a smaller easel nearby. On a table was his journal, open at the final entry. Near it he had placed his watch, a Prayer Book open at the Gospel for the Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany, letters addressed to his wife and children, and a paper headed “Last thoughts of B. R. Haydon, half-past ten.”

These “Last thoughts” were hardly evidence of madness, although they apparently seemed so to some who did not know the workings of the painter’s mind and conscience. They consisted of a comparison of the ethics of Wellington and Napoleon: “Wellington never used evil if the good was not certain. Napoleon had no such scruples, and I fear the glitter of his genius rather dazzled me. . . .” The point Haydon evidently wished to make was that in his indiscriminate borrowings he had, perhaps, shown the unscrupulousness of Napoleon, whereas Wellington would have been a better guide. His motives had been pure (“when encouraged I paid everybody”), but “No man should use certain evil for probable good, however great the object. Evil is the prerogative of Deity.” These “Last thoughts” were clearly intended as an *amende honorable* to his creditors for debts which could now never be paid.

The coroner’s jury, under Mr. Wakley, M.P., met at Norfolk Arms Tavern nearby, and after four hours’ deliberation found that the deceased had been “in an unsound state of mind when he committed the act,” the customary verdict in cases of suicide.

When he was buried in Paddington New Churchyard near his five small children, a large crowd followed his body to the ceme-

tery. His gravestone, now badly defaced by the weather, bears the inscription: "He devoted 42 years to the improvement of the taste of the English people in high art and died brokenhearted from pecuniary distress." On it, too, are the names of Newton Haydon, "who died May 19th 1836 aged nine months," and Simon Hyman. Any other words that may have once appeared have been obliterated by time. According to the Parish Registers, Mrs. Haydon is also buried in the churchyard, but no stone marks her resting place or those of the small Haydons. The painter's grave is pleasantly situated near a fine beech tree, a few yards from the tomb of Mrs. Siddons.

Why did Haydon commit suicide? Why does anyone commit suicide? To some, it is always an act of insanity; and there were those who felt that Haydon was mad, not only when he destroyed himself, but throughout most of his life.⁵ Others have attributed his suicide to disappointment and chagrin over his failure in the cartoon competition, when he saw his most cherished ambition lying in the dust. And it is true that he had written Miss Mitford in 1824: "die I shall at last from the agonies of racked ambition."

The Times in an editorial, the day following the report of the inquest, referred to Haydon's death as "one of those terrible catastrophes which occasionally burst upon the nation" and continued: "The display of a disgusting dwarf attracted hordes of gaping idiots, who poured into the yawning pockets of a Yankee showman a stream of wealth one tithe of which would have redeemed an honourable English artist from wretchedness and death."

But some of those who knew Haydon best had a different explanation. Talfourd, who was extremely close to Haydon in his latter years, ascribed his suicide to "a hope to awaken sympathy for those whom living he could not shelter." And Mary Russell Mitford expressed much the same idea: "I was always certain," she wrote a friend in 1852, "that his suicide proceeded from a desire to provide for his family." The painter's farewell note to Mary, his wife—unless one chooses to consider it no more than the ravings of a madman—seems to substantiate this motive.

⁵The medical men, Dr. Elliotson and Mr. Bryant, who performed a post-mortem on his brain, found, they said, conclusive evidence of inflammation and disease.

London, Painting-room

June 22

God bless thee, dearest love! Pardon this last pang! Many thou hast suffered from me! God bless thee in dear widowhood; I hope Sir Robert Peel will consider I have earned a pension for thee. A thousand kisses

Thy dear husband and love thee to the last,

B. R. Haydon

Give Mary £10, and dear Frank £10, the rest for your dear self of the balance from Sir Robert's £50.⁶

Haydon left a will in which he requested that Sergeant T. N. Talfourd, Dr. George Darling, and David Trevena Coulton act as his executors; but as it was unwitnessed and as the coroner's jury had found him to be of unsound mind, it is doubtful that any attempt was made to probate it. After a tribute to his wife—"a heroine in adversity and an angel in peace"—he detailed his few possessions, mostly unsold paintings, and his many debts, the total of which he estimated at £3000. This was probably a reasonably accurate guess, although it was impossible by that time to arrive at an exact figure.

In its statements, the will seems entirely rational. He asks God's forgiveness for the step that he is about to take, protests that he has done his duty to his children and his art, forgives his enemies and slanderers, and hopes that his creditors, "worthy and *unworthy*," will forgive him. He asks Mary's pardon, and his children's, "for the additional pang, but it will be the last, and released from the burthen of my ambition they will be happier and suffer less."

Shortly after Haydon's death became known, a public meeting was held to raise subscriptions for the relief of his family. A considerable sum, in excess of £2000, was raised and invested for their benefit. This included £200 which Sir Robert Peel had authorized the Treasury to send, and £100 of his own money. Lady Peel added a pension of £25 a year from funds at her disposal; and Sir Robert obtained a civil-list pension of 2s. 9d. per diem (£50 a year) for the widow. The Royal Academy subscribed £50. Frederic Haydon, who resented the necessity of this charity, especially what he considered the niggardliness of the civil-list pension,

⁶This, with the notes he left for his children, was read into the record of the inquest. The individual notes to the children, while made poignant by the circumstances, were conventional exhortations to be good and honorable.

was resolved to repay the amounts subscribed, at least to the private contributors; but after a considerable sum had been accumulated for this purpose, he was relieved of the obligation when the money "went down with its bankers into the deep insolvent."

The unhappy story of the painter's family is soon told. Mrs. Mary Haydon survived her husband by only eight years. She died intestate at Henstridge Villas, St. John's Wood, on July 25, 1854, at the age of 61; as her son Frederic says, "worn prematurely to death by the sorrows and anxieties of her life." Her estate was valued at £300.

The daughter, Mary Haydon, who was 22 at the time of her father's suicide, was evidently determined to make her own living. Possibly through the assistance of Miss Mitford, she obtained a position as nurse in the family of Lady Higgins, widow of Sir Samuel Gordon Higgins. She died, a spinster of 35, on February 25, 1859, at Boulogne-sur-mer, France. Her effects were valued at less than £200.

Frank Scott Haydon, the elder son, led a life of useful service at the Record Office. The death of his brother Frederic affected him strongly, and on August 7, 1887, he suffered a stroke. This was followed by severe delusions of persecution which led to his committing suicide on October 29 of that year. He, like his father, was found dead in his room by his only daughter. She was granted administration of his personal estate which amounted to £376, 15s.

Frederic Wordsworth Haydon, absent on duty with the Royal Navy at the time of his father's death, transferred to the Civil Service in 1849. He served as sub-inspector and inspector of factories until 1867, when he was deprived of his position because of certain criticisms he had made of the administration of the Home Office. He edited his father's *Correspondence and Table-Talk* in 1876, and included a vigorous defense of the painter in an extended "Memoir." He died at Bethlehem Hospital, London, on November 12, 1886.⁷

⁷So far as I have been able to discover, only one direct, second-generation descendant of the painter is still living, the daughter of Frederic Haydon. She has two sons and one grandson, a "Snotty" in the Royal Navy, who have "no leanings toward art . . . or any love of old things." They are all, she writes, mechanically inclined, perhaps by their relationship to Sir William Fairbairn, her great uncle.

So perished Benjamin Robert Haydon, his wife, his children, and many of his works. He died by his own hand, in ruin and disgrace, convinced that posterity would vindicate his devotion to High Art. Thus far it has failed to do so; and B. R. Haydon, "Historical Painter," as he proudly designated himself, is held in little esteem by the critics and historians of the art he loved.

§

The remarks of several persons concerning Haydon's life and death may here serve as a kind of postscript to what has gone before. On June 24, 1846, Elizabeth Barrett wrote to Robert Browning: ". . . for *this* I cannot help thinking. Could anyone—*could my own hand even . . . have averted what has happened?* My head and heart have ached today over the inactive hand! . . . I have been told again and again (oh, never by *you* my beloved!) that to give money *there* was to drop it into a hole of the ground. But if to have dropped it so, dust to dust, would have saved a living man—what then?" Leigh Hunt wrote on August 12: "I have just read of poor Haydon! how astonishing! for he is one of the last men of whom I should have expected such a thing. I looked upon him as one who turned disappointment itself to a kind of self-glory,—but see how we may be mistaken. . . ." John Ruskin pontificated as follows: "The opposite error, the desire of greatness as such, or rather of what appears great to insolence and vanity . . . [is] an especial and unfailing sign of baseness of mind, . . . as fruitless as it is vile; no way profitable—every way harmful: the widest and most corrupting expression of vulgarity. The microscopic drawing of an insect may be precious; but nothing except disgrace and misguidance will ever be gathered from such work as that of Haydon or Barry."

It is not recorded that the Duke of Wellington said anything at all about Haydon. On the day that notice of the painter's death appeared in *The Times*, however, he did send a servant around to the Haydon house to reclaim his hat.

Appendices



A. HAYDON'S KNOWN PAINTINGS IN ENGLAND AND AMERICA

The following list, which includes only paintings, is as nearly complete as I am able to make it. I have noted the owner or the location of each picture and, when known, its size in inches.

- Thomas Alcock*, (18 x 14) : Royal College of Surgeons of England
Alexander taming Bucephalus: Petworth
Anti-Slavery Convention, (117 x 151) : National Portrait Gallery
Black Prince thanking Lord James Audley: Plymouth Museum and Art Gallery
Chairing the Member: Tate Gallery
Christ blessing Little Children: Church of the Blind, Liverpool
Christ's Agony in the Garden, (120 x 84) : Victoria and Albert Museum
Christ's Entry into Jerusalem: Mt. Saint Mary's Seminary, Norwood, Ohio
Curtius leaping into the Gulf, (126 x 90) : Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter
Dr. George Darling: G. Kenneth Darling
Mrs. George Darling: G. Kenneth Darling
The Assassination of Dentatus: Marquess of Normandy
Death of Eucles: Petworth
George IV and Wellington visiting Waterloo, (60 x 72) : Royal Hospital, Chelsea
Lord Grey Musing: Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-on-Tyne
Alderman Hawkes: Corporation of the City of Norwich
B. R. Haydon, (9 x 6½) : National Portrait Gallery
Leigh Hunt, (23¾ x 19¼) : National Portrait Gallery
The Raising of Lazarus, (168 x 249) : Tate Gallery
Mary Queen of Scots, when an Infant, (56 x 72) : City Art Gallery, Leeds
Meeting of the Unions, (28 x 36) : City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham
The Mock Election, (56 x 72) : Buckingham Palace
Napoleon Musing at St. Helena, (108 x 96) : Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
Pharaoh dismissing Moses ("Death of the First Born"), (102 x 88) : Paisley Abbey

Princess Charlotte of Wales: Royal Collection, Frogmore

Punch, or May-Day, (58½ x 72): Tate Gallery

The Reform Banquet: Earl Grey

The Heroine of Saragossa, (80 x 122): Plymouth Museum and Art Gallery

Gregory William, 14th Baron Saye and Sele: Broughton Castle

Waiting for The Times, (25 x 30½): *The Times* (London)

Waiting for The Times (replica), (10 x 13½): Dr. T. F. Hewer

Wellington Musing on the Field of Waterloo, (127 x 139): Liverpool College

Wordsworth ascending Helvellyn, (49 x 39): National Portrait Gallery

B.

A HAYDON GARLAND

To an unusual degree, Haydon had the power to inspire poetical tributes and reactions to himself and to his art. The list of such poems that follows is substantially complete. The asterisked titles have been included in the foregoing pages. The remaining verses are reproduced in this appendix.

ANONYMOUS

*"Now struck by Macbeth, a cold chill seized by blood" (1816), p. 65

ELIZABETH BARRETT

*Sonnet: "Wordsworth upon Helvellyn! let the cloud" (1842), p. 242

FRANCIS BENNOCH

TO HAYDON

ON SEEING HIS PAINTING OF CHRIST'S TRIUMPHAL ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

What great magician of the earth art thou,
 Who hast such wonders on the canvas wrought?
 In rapt astonishment I gaze, for now
 Those hearts seem bursting with excess of thought;
 Another touch,—those forms will move and speak,
 Proclaiming to the world their author's name,
 On whom Sir Sycophant may vengeance wreak,
 But cannot pluck a tittle from his fame!
 Wherever art or schools of art may be,
 His name with theirs is bound incorporate;
 And they shall live when that monopoly,
 A nation's shame, lies waste and desolate.
 Art's brightest stars thy works will ever shine—
 The Hebrew "Triumph," Haydon, shall be thine!

Francis Bennoch, *Poems, Lyrics, Songs, and Sonnets*, (London, 1877), 332.

CHARLES BONER

ON READING THE ACCOUNT OF B. R. HAYDON'S DEATH

Poor heart! I little thought, when thee I met—
 'Tis scarce a year—in thy own painting-room,
 And talk'd of pictures, some not done as yet,
 But whose accomplishment should cheer the gloom
 Above thy path, alas! to what a doom,
 I little thought to hear such tale of sorrow
 As came today: to me 'twas like the boom,
 Dull, low, and sullen, o'er the ocean hollow,
 That tells of human woe where none may help or follow.

And well do I remember thy glad look,
 And the pleased question, "If 't were really so?"
 As though I flatter'd, or perchance mistook,
 To hear that men abroad thy name did know.
 For I had quitted England long ago;
 And it delighted me that I was able,
 Amid thy disappointments, thus to throw
 A pleasant word: for Fortune, so instable,
 To thee had made Success seem ever a mere fable.

Oh, heaven! 'tis sad to think of! What a host
 Of broken hopes, and agonies and woes,
 And cherish'd wishes overthrown or cross'd,
 Must have convulsed that heart with dreadful throes!
 How great its struggle to sustain—who knows?
 Alas! but too impatient for the goal,
 To free itself from what Thou didst impose,
 Almighty God! Yet Thou but know'st the whole
 Extent of grief that bow'd his sorely-burden'd soul!

Charles Boner, *Verse. 1834-1858*, (London, 1858), 84-5.

REVEREND GEORGE CROLY

THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

I

The air is fill'd with shouts, and trumpets' sounding;
 A host are at thy gates, Jerusalem.
 Now is their van the Mount of Olives rounding;
 Above them Judah's lion-banners gleam,
 Twined with the palm and olives' peaceful stem.
 Now swell the nearer sounds of voice and string,

As down the hill-side pours the living stream;
 And to the cloudless heaven Hosannas ring—
 "The Son of David comes!—the Conqueror—the King!"

II

The cuirass'd Roman heard; and grasp'd his shield,
 And rushed in fiery haste to gate and tower;
 The Pontiff from his battlement beheld
 The host, and knew the falling of his power:
 He saw the cloud on Sion's glory lour.
 Still down the marble road the myriads come,
 Spreading the way with garment, branch, and flower,
 And deeper sounds are mingling, "woe to Rome!"
 "The day of freedom dawns; rise, Israel, from thy tomb."

III

Temple of beauty—long that day is done;
 Thy ark is dust; thy golden cherubim
 In the fierce triumphs of the foe are gone:
 The shades of ages on thy altars swim.
 Yet still a light is there, though wavering dim;
 And has its holy lamp been watch'd in vain?
 Or lives it not until the finish'd time,
 When he who fix'd, shall break his people's chain,
 And Sion be the loved, the crown'd of God again?

IV

He comes, yet with the burning bolt unarm'd;
 Pale, pure, prophetic, God of Majesty!
 Though thousands, tens of thousands, round him swarm'd,
 None durst abide that depth divine of eye;
 None durst the waving of his robe draw nigh.
 But at his feet was laid the Roman's sword:
 There Lazarus knelt to see his King pass by;
 There Jairus, with his age's child, adored.
 "He comes, the King of Kings: Hosanna to the Lord!"

The Poetical Works of the Rev. George Croly, 2 vols., (London, 1830), II, 294-6.

RICHARD HENRY HORNE

TO THE MEMORY OF B. R. HAYDON
By the Author of "Orion"

Mourn, fatal Voice, whom ancients called the Muse!
 Thy fiery whispers rule this mortal hour,
 Wherein the toiling Artist's constant soul
 Revels in glories of a visioned world,—

APPENDICES

Power, like a god, exalting the full heart;
Beauty with subtlest ravishment of grace
Refining all the senses; while afar
Through vistas of the stars where strange friends dwell,
A temple smiles for him to take his seat
Among the happy Dead whose work is done.

Mourn, fatal Voice, whom ancients called the Muse!
Thou lead'st the devotee through fruitful bowers
Wherein Imagination multiplies
Divinely, and, with noblest ecstasy,
To nature ever renders truth for truth.

Mourn, fatal Voice, whom ancients called the Muse!
Thou teachest to be strong and virtuous;
In labour, patient; clear-eyed as a star,
Self-truthful; vigilant within; and full
Of faith to be, and do, and sent it forth;—
But teachest no man how to know himself,
His over-measures or his fallings short,
Nor how to know when he should step aside
Into the quiet shade, to wait his hour
And foil the common dragon of the earth.

O fatal Voice! so syren-sweet, yet rife
With years of sorrow, deathbeds terrible!
Mourn for a worthy son whose aims were high,
Whose faith was strong amidst a scoffing age.
No warning giv'st thou, on the perilous path,
To those who need the gold thy teaching scorns,
Heedless if other knowledge hold due watch.
Thou fill'st with heavenly bliss the enraptured eyes,
While the feet move to ruin and the grave.
Therefore, O voice, inscrutably divine,
Uplifting sunward, casting in the dust,
Forgetting man as man, and mindful only
Of the man-angel even while on earth,—
Mourn now with all thine ancient tenderness,
Mingled with tears that fall in heavy drops,
For One who lost himself, remembering thee!

Transcribed from the *Daily News* by Elizabeth Barrett and sent to Robert Browning in her letter of Saturday, July 4, 1846. *The Letters of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett Barrett*, 2 vols. (London & N. Y., 1899), II, 299-300.

LEIGH HUNT

*Sonnet: "Haydon, whom now the conquered toil confesses" (1816), p. 119

JOHN KEATS

*Sonnet: "Great spirits now on earth are sojourning" (1816), p. 122

TO HAYDON, WITH A SONNET WRITTEN ON SEEING THE ELGIN MARBLES

Haydon! Forgive me that I cannot speak
 Definitively on these mighty things;
 Forgive me that I have not Eagle's wings—
 That what I want I know not where to seek:
 And think that I would not be over meek
 In rolling out upfollow'd thunderings,
 Even to the steep of Heliconian springs,
 Were I of ample strength for such a freak—
 Think too, that all those numbers should be thine;
 Whose else? In this who touch thy vesture's hem?
 For when men star'd at what was most divine
 With browless idiotism—o'erwise phlegm—
 Thou hadst beheld the Hesperean shine
 Of their star in the East, and gone to worship them.

[March 1817]

ADDRESSED TO HAYDON

Highmindedness, a jealousy for good,
 A loving-kindness for the great man's fame,
 Dwells here and there with people of no name,
 In noisome alley, and in pathless wood:
 And where we think the truth least understood,
 Oft may be found a "singleness of aim,"
 That ought to frighten into hooded shame
 A money-mong'ring, pitiable brood.
 How glorious this affection for the cause
 Of stedfast genius, toiling gallantly!
 What when a stout unbending champion awes
 Envy, and Malice to their native sty?
 Unnumber'd souls breathe out a still applause,
 Proud to behold him in his country's eye.

[November 1816]

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CHARLES LAMB

*"What rider's that?" (1820), p. 109

IN TABULAM EXIMII PICTORIS *B. Haydoni*, IN QUA SOLYMAEI, ADVENIENTE
DOMINO, PALMAS IN VIA PROSTERNENTES MIRA ARTE DEPINGUNTUR.

Quid vult iste equitans? et quid velit ista virorum
Palmifera ingens turba, et vox tremebunda Hosanna?
Hosanna Christo semper semperque canamus.

Palma fuit *Senior* pictor celeberrimus olim;
Sed palmam cedat, modo si foret ille superstes,
Palma, *Haydone*, tibi: tu palmas omnibus aufers.

Palma negata macrum, donataque reddit opimum.
Si simul incipiat cum fama increscere corpus,
Tu cito pinguesces, fies et, amicule, obesus.

Affectant lauros pictores atque poetae.
Sin laurum invideant (sed quis tibi?) laurigerentes,
Pro lauro palma viridanti tempora cingas.

[May 1820]

MINASI

SONETTO A HAYDON PITTORE

I

L'Arte tua magica, e l'Armonia soave,
Giovin sublime e raro, me rapisce;
Nel mirar i tuoi quadri ognun stupisce,
Che quasi i piu sorpassi d'eta grave.

II

Dell' Arte Alcide; e qual superba nave
In porto guidata, ch' Eol favorisce,
Tal sembri; e del genio tuo ognun grandisce,
E'l riverente peregrin pronunzia un Ave.

III

Quant' Icari nella Pittura! E quanti
Pochi Raffaelli! (Oh divino Maestro,
Degno fosti, e sarai di mille canti.)

IV

Vorrei piu dir, ma qui me assorbe l'estro . . .
Ne sia lungi de la Brettagna vanti
Al par d'Italia, o Grecia untal Maestro.

From *Annals of the Fine Arts*, II, 114-5. Signed "M[inasi]."

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD

*Sonnet: "Tears in the eye, and on the lips a sigh!" (1817), pp. 94-95

*Sonnet: "Haydon! this dull age and this northern clime" (1823), p. 159

DAVID MACBETH MOIR

SONNET TO HAYDON

Genius immortal, industry untired,
 The power and the capacity of thought
 Sublime, to mighty aspirations wrought,
 Are thine, by thirst of great achievement fired.
 I need not tell thee, Haydon, thou hast felt
 The fears, the ecstasies of daring art,
 The heavings, and the sinkings of the heart,
 At obstacles that oft like vapour smelt,
 And oft like rocks oppose us. It is thine,
 After a warfare silent, but most deep,
 To triumph and o'ercome: thy name shall shine
 In fame's unfading record,—like a river,
 That having toil'd o'er rocks, is left to sleep
 'Mid everlasting hills, and gleam for ever!

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, IX (February 1821), 526. Signed "Δ"; identified as Dr. David Macbeth Moir (1798-1851).

JOHN HAMILTON REYNOLDS

*Sonnet: "Haydon! Thou'rt born to Immortality!" (1816), p. 118

WILLIAM BELL SCOTT

ON READING HAYDON'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The coarse-voiced peacock spreads his starry tail,
 And wheels about that all the world may see,
 Of all God's creatures, I am first, quoth he,
 Meanwhile the part that nature meant to veil
 Winks curiously beneath that radiant sail.
 Vanity must have her eclat, show
 Of clapping hands, boast of grand aims,—and so
 The blessed functions of the artist fail.

Not thus the greatly gifted use their wealth!
 The good man gives nor usurous interest claims;
 The poet craves fit audience only; health
 Works without boasting; Shakspeare turned again
 To the sunset in Stratford:—here, in flames,
 The begging Art-apostle dies insane!

—William Bell Scott, *Poems*, (London, 1854), 171.

TO MR. HAYDON

ON READING HIS ADMIRABLE LETTER, CONTAINING A LEARNED AND MANLY
DEFENCE OF THE ELGIN MARBLES.

SPIRIT of Fire! strong, lucid, and sublime,
That like a sacred halo spread'st thy ray,
To guard the venerated spoils of time,
And gild the relics of a glorious day.

Hail! to thy honest zeal—the dauntless soul,
The treasures of thy mind's resistless force!
Of power each sordid motives [sic] to controul,
And traced ark error to its inmost source.

For thee! the syren Pleasure tun'd in vain
Her melting lute, and bound her brow with flowers;
Or swoln Ambition spread his gorgeous train,
And lured to lordly feasts and lordly bowers.

Unsullied genius; *ardent, pure, intense*,
The breath of Heav'n inform'd thy glowing youth!
Awoke to high pursuit, each finer sense,
And stamp'd thee votary of art and truth.

Unscar'd by labour!—undebas'd by guile!
By cold neglect *untam'd*!—'twas thine at length
To win from fame her long reluctant smile,
And conquer fortune by a giant's strength.

To aid their gifts, may every gentler charm
Shed o'er thy rising path life's dearest zest,
Thine social friendship, lively, bland, and warm,
And *Love*—the solace e'en of Wisdom's breast.

And still as now, be thine th' unbending heart—
The energetic tongue—the piercing eye—
The mind imbued with all the Grecian Art,
And free-born Britain's native majesty.

From *Annals of the Fine Arts*, I, 109.

ON SEEING THE PORTRAIT OF WORDSWORTH, BY HAYDON

Great intellect is here! whether it speak
 The Poet's or the Painter's genius high
 Contemplating the things remote that lie
 Beyond the sight of other mortals. Weak
 Were th' attempt to scan if greater energy
 Rouse up to inspiration one whose eye
 Like this looks searching into Heaven, or mind
 Of him who thus portrays with majesty
 The soul her prison struggling through to find
 Employment suited to her powers. 'Tis like
 Two orbs their lights reflecting,—each receives:
 For, while the Poet's genius seems to strike,
 The Painter's claims the praise his pencil gives.

From *Annals of the Fine Arts*, III, 331.

DANIEL TERRY

LINES ADDRESSED TO HAYDON

Thou has[t] a Spirit, of power and magnitude,
 Oh Haydon! if but truly use'd and humbly
 Before His eye, who with it thee endowed,
 In his appointed time, Fame's noblest Task
 Nobly to accomplish.—Then debase it not
 With weakness unbecoming such high Hope;—
 Wandering from the proud path of Solitude
 Within whose sacred loneliness, apart,
 Great things are wrought to immortality,
 To haunt and flutter in the glaring walks
 Of living Popularity; courting
 With greedy ear the rank and offal scraps
 Of ready Adulation, easy won,
 To feed the impatient maw of Vanity,
 Restless and insatiate of applause,
 With praises premature and undeserved. [*sic*]

Quit not thy pencil for the Pen—Forbear
 By cunning means to Quackery allied
 To have thy Name, thine own dear darting Name,
 Bruited abroad in vulgar mouths. Seek not,
 Showing thy high calling, to have it stuck
 With baser things in plaster'd capitals
 On wall, or pole by slave at corners held;
 Nor displayed, with industrious weakness,
 In page diurnal or hebdomadal—

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That curse unknown to better times of Art,
That Altar by Vanity most worshipp'd
Where her quaint Votaries may offer up
The Sacrifice of Flattery ever sweet.

Avoid it Haydon—Fly from *Self-conceit*
'Tis the dishonest Devil doth beset thy steps
With Art to lure thee from thy course.
Entering Man's brain, the Tempter plies his Task
Prankt in the garb of genuine pride, mimicks
The virtuous throbbings of Ambition's breast,
The noble yearnings after lawful fame
Till, by degrees, perceptions finer powers
Corrupted by the Fiend in the swoln mind,
Distinction dies, and thus deceased it loathes
The wholesome vanity of fair renown
To feed on putrid praise that Flattery yields.

Oh turn indignant and regardless thou
From such repute and list with steady soul
In high imaginations sternly wrapt
To future ages—letting the Tongues alone
Of distant Days falling on Fancy's Ear
Like Ocean's numerous waves at distance heard
In mighty whisperings please thy purer mind;
Desire and heed no other praise but this
And thou shalt be upborne in heart and hand
To consummate thy loftiest aims in Art,
And Time will gather into one wide sound
The voices of one World to make thy Name
A loud and everlasting Note of Fame.

These "Lines addressed to Haydon" are printed here for the first time by kind permission of Mr. Wilfred Partington who possesses the manuscript in Daniel Terry's handwriting.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

*Sonnet: "High is our calling, Friend! Creative Art" (1815), pp. 86-87

*Sonnet: "Haydon! let worthier judges praise the skill" (1831), p. 189

ON A PORTRAIT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON UPON THE FIELD OF WATERLOO, BY HAYDON

By Art's bold privilege Warrior and Warhorse stand
On ground yet strewn with their last battle's wreck;
Let the Steed glory while his Master's hand
Lies fixed for ages on his conscious neck;

But by the Chieftan's look, though at his side
 Hangs that day's treasured sword, how firm a check
 Is given to triumph and all human pride!
 Yon trophied Mound shrinks to a shadowy speck
 In his calm presence! Him the mighty deed
 Elates not, brought far nearer the grave's rest,
 As shows that time-worn face, for he such seed
 Has sown as yields, we trust, the fruit of fame
 In Heaven; hence no one blushes for thy name,
 Conqueror, 'mid some sad thoughts, divinely blest!

[August 31, 1840]

C. THE CORONATION OF GEORGE IV (1821)

I only got my ticket on Wednesday at two, and dearest Mary and I drove about to get all that was wanted. Sir George Beaumont lent me ruffles and frill, another friend a blue velvet coat, a third a sword; I bought buckles, and the rest I had. I went to bed at ten and arose at twelve, not having slept a wink. I dressed, breakfasted, and was at the Hall-door at half-past one. Three ladies were before me.

The doors [of Westminster Hall] opened about four, and I got a front place in the Chamberlain's box, between the door and the throne, and saw the whole room distinctly. Many of the doorkeepers were tipsy; quarrels took place. The sun began to light up the old Gothic windows, the peers to stroll in, and other company of all descriptions to crowd to their places. Some took seats they had not any right to occupy, and were obliged to leave them after sturdy disputes. Others lost their tickets. The Hall occasionally echoed with the hollow roar of voices at the great door, till at last the galleries were filled; the Hall began to get crowded below.

Every movement, as the time approached for the King's appearance, was pregnant with interest. The appearance of a monarch has something in it like the rising of a sun. There are indications which announce the luminary's approach; a streak of light—the tipping of a cloud—the singing of the lark—the brilliance of the sky, till the cloud edges get brighter and brighter, and he rises majestically into the heavens. So with a king's advance.

A whisper of mystery turns all eyes to the throne. Suddenly two or three rise; others fall back; some talk, direct, hurry, stand still, or disappear. Then three or four of high rank appear from behind the throne; an interval is left; the crowds scarce breathe. Something rustles, and a being buried in satin, feathers, and diamonds rolls gracefully into his seat. The room rises with a sort of feathered, silken thunder. Plumes wave, eyes sparkle, glasses are out, mouths smile, and one man becomes the prime object of

APPENDICES

attraction to thousands. The way in which the King bowed was really royal. As he looked towards the peeresses and foreign ambassadors he showed like some gorgeous bird of the East.

After all the ceremonies he arose, the procession was arranged, the music played, and the line began to move. All this was exceedingly imposing. After two or three hours' waiting, during which the attempt of the Queen agitated the Hall, the doors opened, and the flower-girls entered strewing flowers. The grace of their action, their slow movement, their white dresses, were indescribably touching; their light milky colour contrasted with the dark shadow of the archway, which, though dark, was full of rich crimson dresses that gave the shadow a tone as of deep blood; the shadow again relieved by a peep of the crowd, shining in sunlight beyond the gates, and between the shoulders of the guard that crossed the platform. The distant trumpets and shouts of the people, the slow march, and at last the appearance of the King crowned and under a golden canopy, and the universal burst of the assembly at seeing him, affected everybody. As we were all huzzaing, and the King was smiling, I could not help thinking this would be too much for any human being if a drop of poison were not dropped into the cup ere you tasted it. A man would go mad if mortality did not occasionally hold up the mirror. The Queen was to him the death's-head at this stately feast.

After the banquet was over, came the most imposing scene of all, the championship and bringing in of the first dishes. Wellington in his coronet walked down the Hall, cheered by the officers of the Guards. He shortly returned mounted, with Lords Howard and Anglesea. They rode gracefully to the foot of the throne, and then backed out. Lord Anglesea's horse was restive. Wellington became impatient, and, I am convinced, thought it a trick of Lord Anglesea's to attract attention. He never paused, but backed on, and the rest were obliged to follow him. This was a touch of character.

The Hall-doors opened again, and outside in twilight a man in dark shadowed armour appeared against the shining sky. He then moved, passed into darkness under the arch, and suddenly Wellington, Howard, and the Champion stood in full view, with doors closed behind them. This was certainly the finest sight of the day. The herald read the challenge; the glove was thrown down. They all then proceeded to the throne. My imagination got so intoxicated that I came out with a great contempt for the plebs; and as I walked by with my sword I indulged myself in an "*odi profanum.*" I got home quite well, and thought sacred subjects insipid things. How soon should I be ruined in luxurious society!

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Illustrations



FRONTISPIECE

B. R. HAYDON (1820)

HISTORICAL PAINTINGS

CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

CURTIUS LEAPING INTO THE GULF

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS (detail)

NAPOLEON MUSING AT ST. HELENA

GEORGE IV AND WELLINGTON VISITING WATERLOO

THE CONTEMPORARY SCENE

PUNCH, OR MAY-DAY

WAITING FOR THE TIMES

THE MEETING OF THE UNIONS AT BIRMINGHAM

PORTRAITS

DR. GEORGE DARLING. MRS. GEORGE DARLING

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT. B. R. HAYDON

WORDSWORTH ASCENDING HELVELLYN

DRAWINGS AND PRINTS

JOHN KEATS

B. R. HAYDON (1824)

STUDY: WILLIAM HARVEY'S HAND

DAVID WILKIE IN AN ARGUMENT

JOHN JACKSON. HENRY FUSELI. T. N. TALFOURD

HAYDON ASLEEP (by Wilkie)

J. C. F. ROSSI

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

MISCELLANEOUS

Caricature: A MASTER . . . AND HIS PUPILS

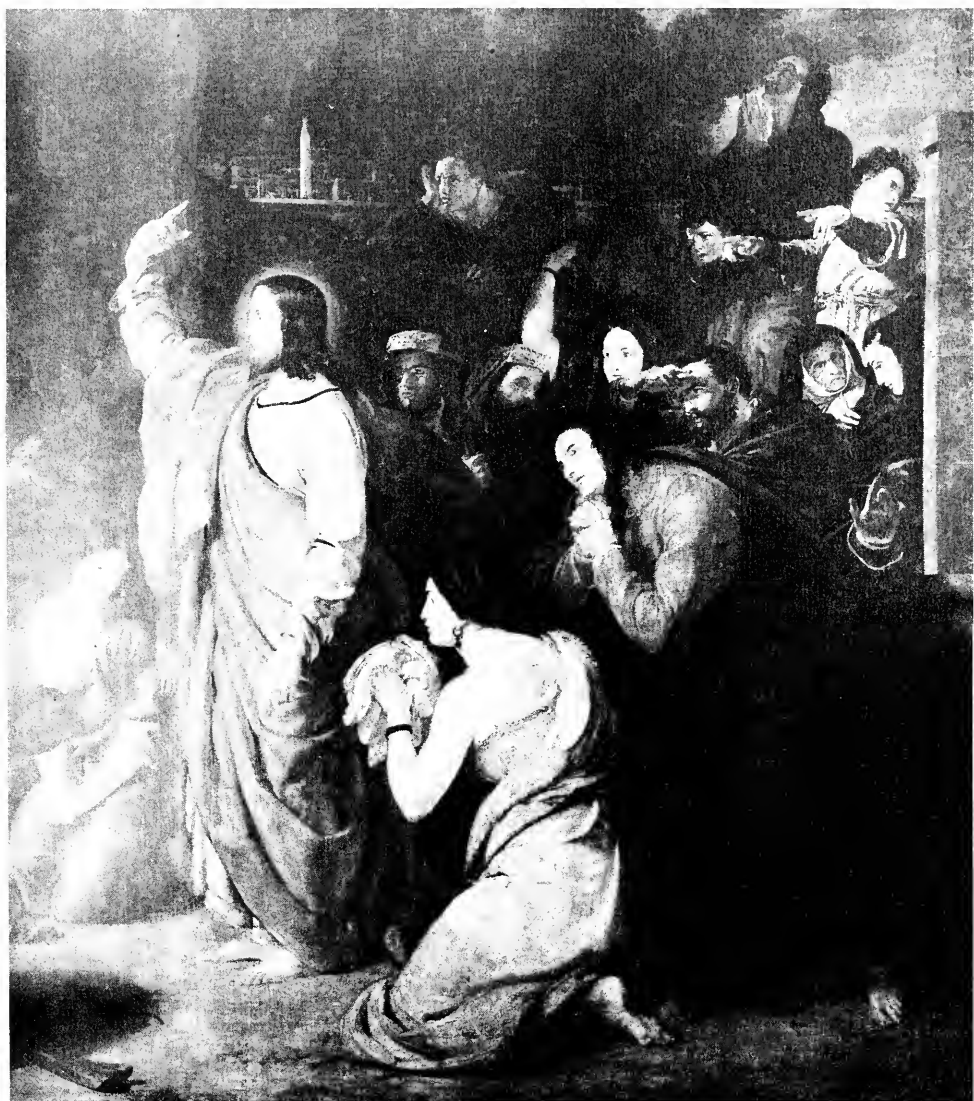
THE STRAND. KING'S BENCH PRISON. EGYPTIAN HALL



CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM
By courtesy of Mount St. Mary's Seminary of the West, Norwood, Ohio



CURTIUS LEAPING INTO THE GULF
By courtesy of the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter



THE RAISING OF LAZARUS (detail)
By courtesy of the trustees of the Tate Gallery



NAPOLEON Musing AT ST. HELENA
By permission of the Metropolitan Museum of Art



GEORGE IV AND WELLINGTON VISITING WATERLOO
By courtesy of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea



PUNCH, OR MAY-DAY
By courtesy of the Trustees of the Tate Gallery



WAITING FOR *The Times* THE MORNING AFTER THE DEBATE ON REFORM, OCTOBER 1831
By courtesy of *The Times* (London)



THE MEETING OF THE UNIONS ON NEWHALL HILL, BIRMINGHAM, ON MAY 7, 1832
By courtesy of the Birmingham City Art Gallery

Mrs. GEORGE DARLING

By courtesy of Mr. G. Kenneth Darling

DR. GEORGE DARLING



JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT
National Portrait Gallery



BENJAMIN ROBERT HAYDON (self portrait)
National Portrait Gallery



WORDSWORTH ASCENDING HELVELLYN
National Portrait Gallery



Sketched in the painting-room from life, Nov. 1816.

JOHN KEATS (profile)
"Sketched in the painting-room from life, Nov. 1816"
From *Correspondence and Table-Talk*, II



B. R. Haydon

London, Pub^d for the Proprietors of the European Mag. by Sherwood, Jones & Co. Paternoster Row, Dec. 1. 1824.

B. R. HAYDON (1824)

Engraved by Thomson from a painting by Haydon. Published for the Proprietors of the *European Magazine* by Sherwood, Jones and Co., Paternoster Row, December 1, 1824



STUDY OF WILLIAM HARVEY'S HAND

(for the Christ in *The Raising of Lazarus*), June 16, 1821

"I think this the most perfect drawing I ever did."

RRH" British Museum



DAVID WILKIE IN AN ARGUMENT

Sketch, December 20, 1807.

From *Correspondence and Table-Talk*, I



HENRY FUSELI, R.A.

Engraved by R. W. Sievier, from a miniature by Moses Haughton.
Published May 1, 1820 by T. Cadell and W. Davies, Strand, London



JOHN JACKSON, R.A.

Engraved by Thompson from a self portrait
by Jackson. Published for the Proprietors of
the *European Magazine* by Lupton Rolfe,
Cornhill, September 1, 1823



THOMAS NOON TALFOURD

Engraved by John Roffe from a painting
by Haydon

Sir David Wilkie



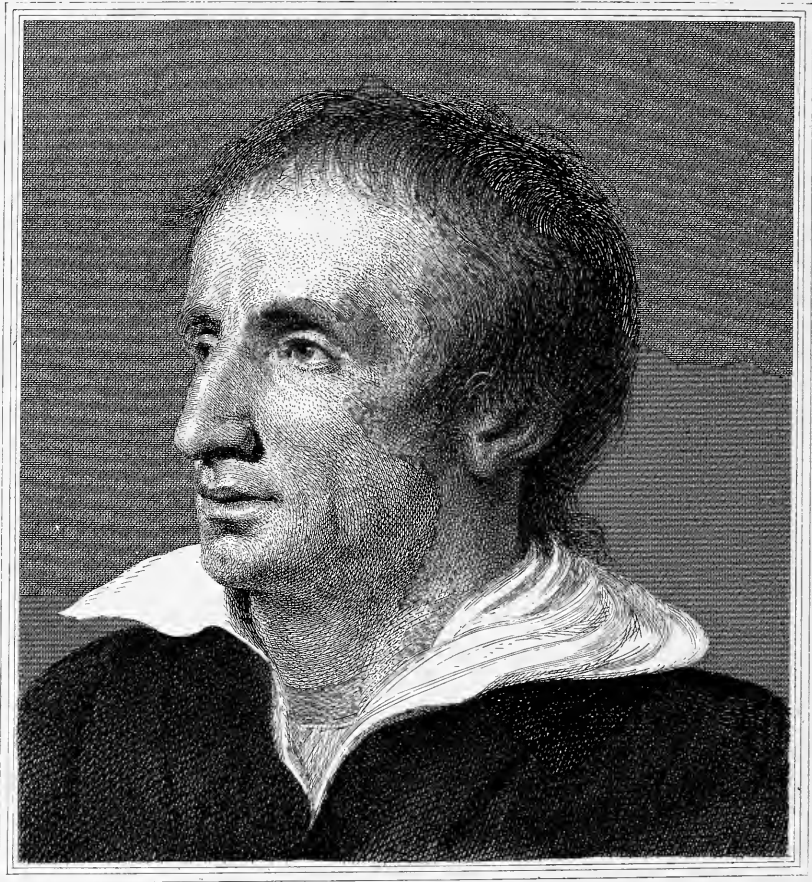
a drawing of Sir David Wilkie of B. R. Haydon asleep.
Lodgings at Brighton 1815.

A DRAWING OF SIR DAVID WILKIE OF B. R. HAYDON ASLEEP. Lodgings Clarence Place at Brighton 1815.
British Museum



Charles Rossi, R.A.

JOHN CHARLES FELIX ROSSI, R.A. (1762-1839), Sculptor.
(Haydon's one-time landlord.)
By an unknown artist

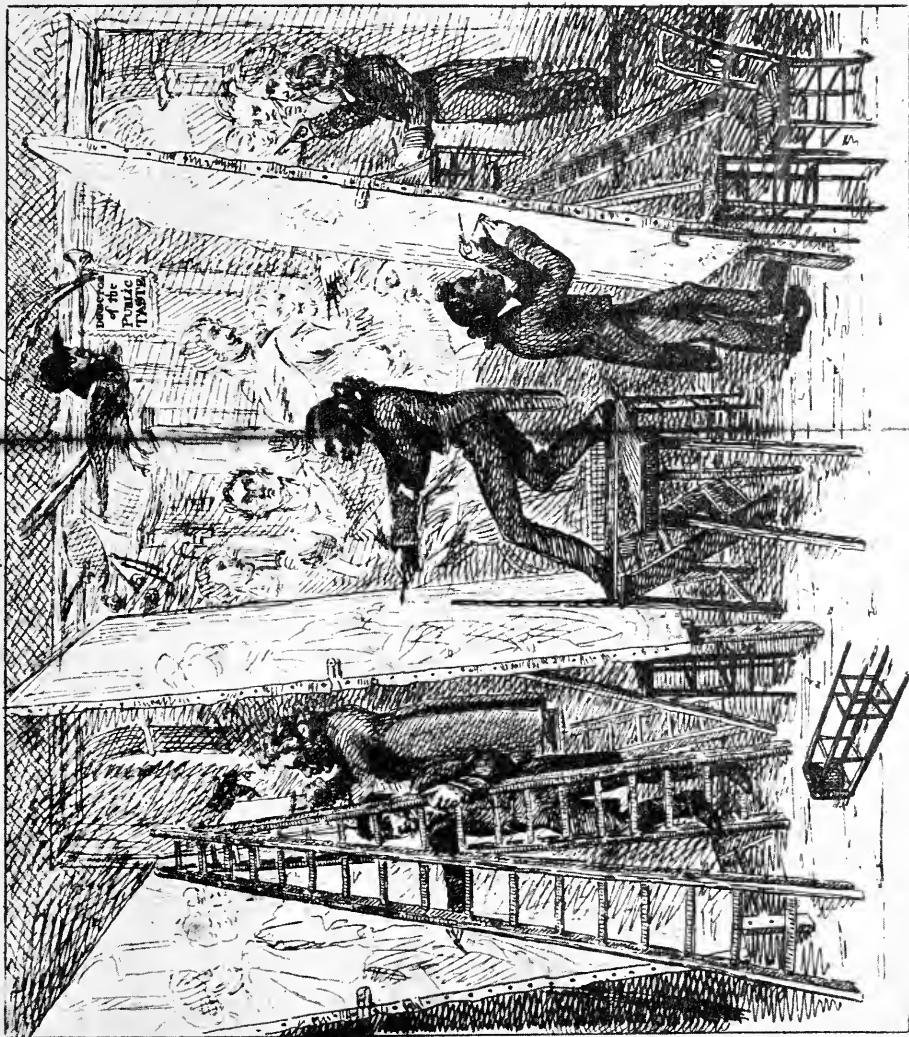


From a drawing by George Haydon.

William Wordsworth

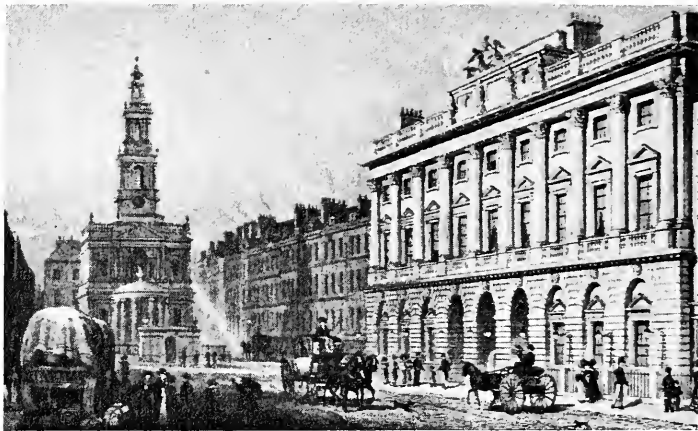
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Engraved by Thomas Landseer from a drawing by Haydon, 1818. Published May 1,
1831 by T. Landseer, Southampton Street, London



A Painter who relies on his compass, leans on a prop which will not support him. Vide, Sir Joshua Reynolds.

Caricature: A MASTER IN THE GRAND STYLE AND HIS PUPILS
By John Bailey. From *Annals of the Fine Arts*, April 1, 1818



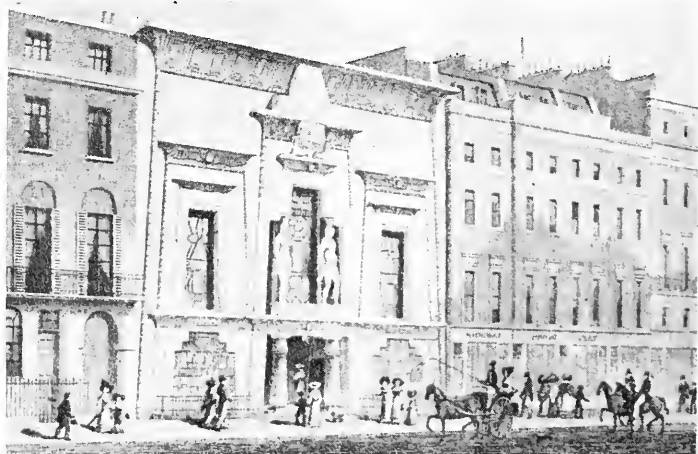
SOMERSET HOUSE AND THE STRAND

Drawing by T. H. Shepherd in his *London and Its Environs in the Nineteenth Century*, London, 1829



KING'S BENCH PRISON

Drawing by T. H. Shepherd in his *London and Its Environs in the Nineteenth Century*, London, 1829



THE EGYPTIAN HALL

Drawing by T. H. Shepherd in James Elmes, *Metropolitan Improvements; or, London in the Nineteenth Century*, London, 1827

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